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"because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed;
blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

OPINIONS

OF

LEARNED AND EMINENT MEN

ON THE

TRUTH, STYLE, AND IMPORTANCE

OF THE

HOLY BIBLE.

[Rodd, Horatio =
"]

“THIS BOOK OF THE LAW SHALL NOT DEPART OUT OF THY MOUTH ;
BUT THOU SHALT MEDITATE THEREIN DAY AND NIGHT, THAT THOU
MAYEST OBSERVE TO DO ACCORDING TO ALL THAT IS WRITTEN THEREIN :
FOR THEN THOU SHALT MAKE THY WAY PROSPEROUS, AND THEN THOU
SHALT HAVE GOOD SUCCESS.”—*Joshua*, i. 8.

LONDON :

THOMAS RODD, 2, GREAT NEWPORT STREET.

MDCCCXXXIX.

TO THE
GENERAL
COUNCIL

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Answered
P. 11

TO THOSE
CHRISTIANS OF EVERY DENOMINATION

WHO MAKE

THE SACRED VOLUME

THE STANDARD OF THEIR FAITH, AND THE BANNER OF THEIR SALVATION,

THESE OPINIONS

ON ITS TRUTH, BEAUTY, AND IMPORTANCE,

WHICH

AFFORD MATERIAL FOR CONSOLATION TO THE BELIEVER,

AND FOR THE MOST SERIOUS REFLECTION TO THE

UNBELIEVER,

ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY

THEIR FAITHFUL AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE COMPILER.

INTRODUCTION.

It is presumed that but little preface is required to a work which proposes to lay before the public, in a clear and concise form, the eulogies which have been uttered in every period of Christianity, on the truth, beauty, and perfection of the Sacred Volume. Echoed and re-echoed as they have been from year to year, and from age to age, by the greatest, the wisest, and the best of men, we may consider them as constituting a conclusive argument of the inestimable value of the Scriptures. For the decision of such men is the natural and faithful monitor of succeeding ages; it is the beacon set on a hill, whose sure and steadfast light is in continual contrast with the wild and transient glare of the wisdom which is not from above.

“ If journeying from one city to another,” says an ancient writer, “ we require a guide, in how much greater need of guides is the soul departing from the body, and migrating to a future life.” Those whose sentiments are here given have indeed, for the most part, passed onward from their earthly inheritance to the eternal city, to the mansions of their heavenly Father ; and as we, like them, are but “ strangers and sojourners” on earth, let us learn from their experience the value of that guidance by which they journeyed in security to the place of their rest. In collecting the suffrages of all classes of Christians on this subject, the editor trusts he has performed a task as gratifying to the reader as to himself ; since the union of all Christians around the record of their common hope, is itself the fulfilment of that great and too much neglected command of Christ to his disciples, that they might be one, even as He was one with the Father. Many of those whose testimonies are here produced, have been submitted to by the world as lawgivers on

those points of science and learning to which the powers of their respective minds were directed. Nor is it claiming too great a concession to require that the opinions of such men on this, the most important of all subjects, be treated with regard and consideration. The possession of novelty or originality is not asserted in behalf of a compilation such as this. Satisfied in presenting to the reader, more simply and comprehensively, perhaps, than has been hitherto done, the concurrent opinions of all ages of Christianity, the editor trusts that the usefulness of his plan will conciliate for his work some portion at least of public regard, and of that indulgence so constantly extended to any attempt, however humble, towards advancing the glory of God, and the honour of religion and virtue.

July 29th, 1838.

OPINIONS
ON THE
TRUTH, EXCELLENCE, SUBLIMITY,
AND
IMPORTANCE
OF
THE HOLY BIBLE.

THOMAS FULLER, D.D.

Prebendary of Sarum, an English Historian and Divine,
born in Northamptonshire, 1600—died 1661.

THE NEW TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE FINISHED BY
THE COMMAND OF KING JAMES, AND CARE OF SOME
CHOSEN DIVINES.

And now after long expectation, and great desire, came forth the new translation of the Bible (most beautifully printed) by a select and competent number of divines, appointed for that purpose, not being too many, lest one should trouble another; and yet many, lest in any things might haply escape them. Who neither coveting praise for expedition, nor fearing reproach for slacknesse (seeing in a business of moment, none deserve blame for convenient slownesse) had expended almost three years in the

work, not only examining the channels by the fountain, translations with the originals, which was absolutely necessary, but also comparing channels with channels, which was abundantly usefull, in the Spanish, Italian, French, and Dutch languages. So that their industrie, skilfulnesse, piety, and discretion, hath herein bound the church unto them in a debt of speciall remembrance and thankfulness. These with a Jacob, rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well of life; so that now even Rahel's weak women may freely come, both to drink themselves, and water the flocks of their families at the same time.

The Church History of Britain.
Fol. Lond. 1656, Book x. p. 57-8.

Leave we then these worthy men, now all of them gathered to their fathers, and gone to God (however they were requited on earth) well rewarded in heaven for their worthy work. Of whom as also of that gracious King that employed them, we may say, wheresoever the Bible shall be preached or read in the whole world, there shall also this that they have done be told in memorial of them.

Idem.

EDMUND WALLER.

An English Poet of popularity, was born at Colshill, in Hertfordshire—died 1687.

ASSERTING THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURE.

The Grecian Muse has all their Gods surviv'd,
Nor Jove at us, nor Phœbus, is arriv'd;
Frail Deities, which first the poets made,
And then invok'd, to give their fancies aid!
Yet if they still divert us with their rage,
What may be hop'd for in a better age;
When not from Helicon's imagin'd spring,
But Sacred Writ, we borrow what we sing?
This with the fabrick of the world begun,
Elder than light, and shall outlast the sun.

Before this oracle (like Dagon) all
The false pretenders, Delphos, Hammon, fall;
Long since despis'd, and silent, they afford
Honour and triumph to th' Eternal Word.
As late philosophy our globe has grac'd,
And rowling earth among the planets plac'd;
So has this Book intitled us to heav'n,
And rules to guide us to that mansion giv'n:
Tells the conditions, how our peace was made,
And is our pledge for the great author's aid.
His power in Nature's ample book we find;
But the less volume does express his mind.
This light unknown, bold Epicurus taught,
That his blest Gods vouchsafe us not a thought;
But unconcern'd, let all below them slide,
As fortune does, or humane wisdom, guide.

Religion thus remov'd, the sacred yoke
And band of all society is broke :
What use of oaths, of promise, or of test,
Where men regard no God but interest ?
What endless war wou'd jealous nations tear,
If none above did witness what they swear ?
Sad fate of unbelievers, (and yet just,)
Among themselves to find so little trust !
Were Scripture silent, Nature wou'd proclaim,
Without a God, our falsehood and our shame.
To know our thoughts the object of his eyes,
Is the first step tow'rds being good or wise ;
For tho' with judgment we on things reflect,
Our will determines, not our intellect :
Slaves to their passion, reason men employ
Only to compass what they wou'd enjoy ;
His fear, to guard us from ourselves, we need,
And Sacred Writ our reason does exceed.
For tho' heav'n shows the glory of the Lord,
Yet something shines more glorious in his Word ;
His mercy this (which all his work excels)
His tender kindness, and compassion, tells :
While we, inform'd by that Celestial Book,
Into the bowels of our Maker look.
Love there reveal'd, which never shall have end,
Nor had beginning, shall our song commend ;
Describe itself, and warm us with that flame,
Which first from heav'n, to make us happy, came.

JAMES MONTGOMERY, OF SHEFFIELD.

Poet.

The possession of the Bible alone—including treasures of history, jurisprudence, poetry, and ethics, capable above all other books of informing, expanding, delighting, and exalting the mind, while the heart is purified,—the possession of the Bible alone, with the power of reading and understanding its wonderful and blessed contents, sets the humblest Christian among us, above the most enlightened heathen philosopher, in the true knowledge of the true God.

Speech delivered before the Philosophical Society of Sheffield.

JOHN WILMOT, EARL OF ROCHESTER.

A noted Wit in the reign of Charles II., was born in Oxfordshire, 1647—died 1680.

“One day at an atheistical meeting, at a person of quality’s, I undertook to manage the cause, and was the principal disputant against God and piety, and for my performances received the applause of the whole company; upon which my mind was terribly struck, and I immediately reply’d thus to myself. Good God! that a man, that walks upright, that sees the wonderful works of God, and has the use of his senses and reason, should use them to the defying of his Creator! But tho’ this was a good beginning towards

my conversion, to find my conscience touch'd for my sins, yet it went off again; nay all my life long I had a secret value and reverence for an honest man, and lov'd morality in others. But I had formed an odd scheme of religion to myself, which would solve all that God or conscience might force upon me; yet I was not ever well reconciled to the business of Christianity, nor had that reverence for the Gospel of Christ, as I ought to have." Which estate of mind continued, till the 53d chapter of Isaiah was read to him, (wherein there is a lively description of the sufferings of our Saviour, and the benefits thereof,) and some other portions of Scripture; by the power and efficacy of which word, assisted by his Holy Spirit, God so wrought upon his heart, that he declar'd, that "the mysteries of the Passion appeared so clear and plain to him, as ever any thing did that was represented in a glass;" so that that joy and admiration, which possess'd his soule upon reading God's Word to him, was remarkable to all about him; and he had so much delight in his testimonies, that in my absence he begg'd his mother and lady to read the same to him frequently, and was unsatisfied (notwithstanding his great pains and weakness) till he had learn'd especially the 53d of Isaiah without book.

*Sermon at the funeral of John Earl of Rochester,
by the Rev. R. Parsons, 4to. Oxford, 1680, p. 26.*

SIR RICHARD STEELE.

The first of a class of writers called the British Essayists, was born at Dublin, 1671—died 1729.

The history I am going to speak of is that of Joseph in Holy Writ, which is related with such majestic simplicity, that all the parts of it strike us with the strongest touches of nature and compassion, and he must be a stranger to both who can read it with attention and not be overwhelmed with the vicissitudes of joy and sorrow. I hope it will not be a prophanation to tell it one's own way here, that they who may be unthinking enough to be more frequently readers of such papers as this than of Sacred Writ, may be advertised, that the greatest pleasures the imagination can be entertained with, are to be found there, and THAT EVEN THE STYLE OF THE SCRIPTURES IS MORE THAN HUMAN.

Tatler, No. 233.

HENRY PEACHAM.

An eminent author in the reigns of James I. and Charles I.

But forasmuch : as the knowledge of God, is the true end of all knowledge, wherein as in the boundlesse and immense ocean, all our studies and endeavours ought to embosome themselves : remember to lay the foundation of your studies, the feare and service of God, by oft frequenting prayer and sermons, reading the Scriptures, and other tractates of piety and devotion : which

howsoever prophane and irreligious spirits condemne and contemne, as Politian a canon of Florence, being upon occasion asked if hee ever read the Bible over : “ Yes once ” (quoth he) “ I read it quite thorow, but never bestowed my time worse in all my life.” Beleeve you with Chrysostome that the ignorance of the Scriptures, is the beginning and fountaine of all evill : that the word of God is (as our Saviour calleth it) the key of knowledge ; which given by inspiration of God, is profitable to teach, to convince, to correct, and to instruct in righteousness. And rather let the pious and good King Alphonsus, be a president unto you and to all nobility, who read over the Bible not once, nor twice, but foureteene times, with the Postils of Lyra and Burgensis, containing thrice or foure times as much in quantity, and would cause it to be carryed ordinarily with his scepter before him, whereon was engraven, *Pro Lege Grege*. And that worthy emperour, and great champion of Christendome, Charlemaigne, who spent his dayes of rest (after so many glorious victories obtained of the Saracens in Spaine, the Hunnes, Saxons, Gothes and Vandals in Lumbardy, and Italy, with many other barbarous nations, whereof millions fell under his sword) in reading the Holy Scriptures, and the workes of the Fathers, especially S. Augustine, and his bookes “ *De Civitate Dei*,” in which hee tooke much delight.

JOHN DAVENANT, D. D.

Bishop of Salisbury, a native of London—died 1641.

The general love of God to mankinde is so clearly testified in Holy Scripture, and so demonstrated by the manifold effects of God's goodness and mercy extended to every particular man in the world, that to doubt thereof were infidelity, and to deny it, plain blasphemy.

*Animadversions upon a Treatise intituled
"God's Love to Mankind."* 8vo. Lond. 1641.

JACOB BRYANT.

An author of uncommon learning and research, was born at Plymouth, 1715—died, 1804.

This investigation I more readily undertook, as it affords an excellent contrast with the Sacred Writings. The more we search into the very ancient records of Rome or Greece, the greater darkness and uncertainty ensue. None of them can stand the test of close examination. Upon a minute inspection, all becomes dark and doubtful, and often inconsistent: but when we encounter the Sacred Volume, even in parts of far higher antiquity, the deeper we go, the greater treasure we find. The various parts are so consistent, that they afford mutual illustration; and the more earnestly we look, the greater light accrues, and, consequently, the greater satisfaction. So it has always appeared to me, who

have looked diligently, and examined; and I trust I have not been mistaken.

A Dissertation concerning the War of Troy and the Expedition of the Grecians. 4to. Lond. 1799, p. 128.

JAMES BURGH.

A moral and political writer, was born in Perthshire, 1714—died, 1775.

I will now give you a few rules for your conduct as to *religion* :—

We, your pious predecessors, have been long labouring to *write*, and to *live*, our religion out of doors. We have made considerable advances in the *latter* way. As to the former, we have been doing our best to prove Christianity a mere *human invention* : but we have been a little puzzled to make out the *consistency* of a villainous plot for making mankind angels, and this world heaven, by a sett of wicked, amiable, designing, artless, selfish, disinterested, illiterate, profound impostors, who, from motives of worldly honors, pleasures, and wealth, gave themselves up to persecution and death, in order to establish their heaven-descended false religion, consisting of a set of fictions, which they themselves saw with their own eyes; which religion they accordingly did establish on the ruins of all those, which were then professed in the world, in spite of the corrupt dispositions of the unthinking people, the bigotry of interested priests, and the power of priest-led princes,

without the use of worldly compulsion or allure-
ment, for working on the hopes or fears of man-
kind, and in opposition to the utmost rage of
persecution.

We have bestowed much honest pains in
endeavouring to shew, that a sett of sordid *Jews*
might naturally be expected to give the world
a system of ethics and theology, whose *purity*
and *sublimity* should make those of the *polite* and
learned Greeks contemptible. We have tried
to make out the *foretelling* of future *events* to
have been only *a contrivance* of the authors of
the Bible, who first *penned* the predictions, and
then found means, many *centuries* after they were
dead, to get them *fulfilled*. We have found no
small difficulty in soldering up the flaws in this
part of our scheme. We have not, for instance,
been able to account, in a completely satisfactory
manner, how Moses, who lived you know, above
three thousand years ago, should after he was
dead, contrive to put the *Jews of our times* in
the very condition, he foretold so long since ; a
condition so very *singular*, that no nation, in any
period, before or since, ever was in circumstances
at all resembling theirs. It has likewise cost
us, as the French say, a good deal of Latin to
account how the prophets who foretold that
Babylon and Tyre, the most flourishing cities
then in the world, should not only be desolated,
but should *never* be rebuilt, have managed matters
so, as to prevent their being rebuilt, without once

stirring out of their graves to give any orders about the matter. So, likewise, we have lost much labour in endeavouring to make out, how he, who foretold, twenty *centuries* ago, that Egypt should never more be governed by a *native*, has contrived to *prevent* this from happening ; which would have effectually proved him a *false* prophet. We have been a good deal puzzled to account how we come to have the outlines of the history of the *four* monarchies delineated by an impostor, before the *second* of the four existed.

Crito, 2 vols. 12mo. 1766, vol. 2, p. 105, *et seq.*

We have faithfully laboured to make out the author of the New-Testament-religion, either an *enthusiast* or an *impostor*. He must have been either one, or the other, you know, unless he was the true *Messiah* which we eighteenth century folks do not care to admit. We have been at a loss to make him out an enthusiast : because *enthusiasts* do not produce *New Testaments*. And we have been as much distressed to prove him a deceiver : because deceivers who take to the trade of religion-making, never fail to *turn* the *penny* ; whereas the religion of the New Testament, as it stands in the book, detaches itself wholly from every *secular* advantage. These, and many other difficulties, have thrown themselves across our way, as we have been using our laudable endeavours to prove our religion an *imposture*. If however, you should by

your extraordinary sagacity, come to find in a satisfactory manner, and without any *place* left for *doubting*, that it is a mere *fiction*; burn your Bibles at once.

Idem.

WILLIAM GRIMSHAW.

One of the Society of Friends.

From a feeling of sense of the value and importance of these Sacred Writings, as the only authorised record of God's will, it is our duty as well as privilege to seek into them.

The Scriptures are not written in the temporising spirit of man, their purity opposes his favourite pursuits and gratifications. A writer hath observed, that, "If the Scriptures had been more literal and more adapted to our reason and natural understandings, they would be more generally received, but less revered;" but unless we receive them as the Oracles of God we shall receive them to little profit. Had the Scriptures been only of human origin, however excellent, where would have been their stability? If man, as man, had a right to propound a law or ordinance, the same would remain in man to abrogate or alter it; therefore they are not to be considered as the work of man, but as founded upon that immutable basis, upon that unchangeable rock, against which nothing will be suffered to prevail; their perfections are such, that they admit neither addition nor diminution from man. Although

the Scriptures may be as a sealed book in respect to their virtue and excellence to the vain and to the hardened mind ; yet, dear reader, to those who are of an upright humble spirit, there is much encouragement to search them : for I have no doubt that, if we seek in a truly humble and reverent frame, God will meet us there, and with a ray of his light will show us a portion of his ways sufficient to encourage us to proceed. And as patience and humility are maintained, he will endow us with a larger portion of intellectual vision, compared to that day-star from above, untill the fulness of light, even the Sun of Righteousness himself, shall arise as with healing in his wings ; when we shall not only *see* and *understand*, but the Scripture balm shall be applied to the healing of our souls.

An Extract from a Work entitled The Principles of Christianity Vindicated, &c. 12mo. 1837.

GEORGE FREDERICK SEILER.

In 1770, Dr. Seiler was appointed Ordinary Professor of Divinity at Erlangen ; in 1772, Preacher to the University ; and in 1778, Minister of the Principal Church, and Superintendent of the District, or Diocese, according to the constitution of the Lutheran Church. He died May 13, 1807, aged 74.

Independently of all considerations of religious advantages, no book has conduced more than the Bible to the high cultivation and moral advancement of the human mind. The labour bestowed by so many of the learned upon the just

interpretation of this inestimable book is of itself an attestation of its worth, and gives countenance to the supposition that Divine Providence has appointed it for the attainment of great designs. So long as the professors of that religion, whose doctrine and morals are contained in the Bible, apply themselves, as they have hitherto done, to explain its contents, the learning of Christians will be eminently conspicuous.

Biblical Hermeneutics, Trans. by W. Wright, LL.D. 8vo., Lond. 1835, Author's Preface.

REV. RICHARD CECIL, M.A.

Rector of Bisley, and Vicar of Chobham, Surrey, and Minister of St. John's Chapel, Bedford-row, London. Born in Chiswell-street, London, Nov. 8, 1748—died Aug. 15, 1810.

I see in the Bible my heart and the world painted to the life ; and I see just that provision made, which is competent to the highest ends and effects on this heart and this world.

Remains, 8vo., London, 1827, p. 295.

The Bible resembles an extensive and highly cultivated garden, where there is a vast variety and profusion of fruits and flowers ; some of which are more essential or more splendid than others ; but there is not a blade suffered to grow in it, which has not its use and beauty in the system. Salvation for sinners is the grand truth

presented every where, and in all points of light ; but the pure in heart sees a thousand traits of the Divine Character, of himself and of the world—some striking and bold, others cast as it were into the shade, and designed to be searched for and examined—some direct, others by way of intimation or inference.

Idem, p. 295.

He, who reads the Scriptures only in the translation, is but meanly prepared as a public teacher. The habit of reading the Scriptures in the original throws a new light and sense over numberless passages. The original has, indeed, been obtruded so frequently, and sometimes so absurdly, on the hearers, that their confidence in the translation has been shaken. The judicious line of conduct herein, is—to think with the wise, and talk with the vulgar—to attain, as far as possible and by all means, the true sense and force of every passage ; and, wherever that differs from the received translation, work it in imperceptibly, that the hearers may be instructed while they receive no prejudice against that form in which they enjoy the Scriptures.

Idem, p. 295-6.

Were the Scriptures required to supply a direct answer to every question which even a sincere enquirer might ask, it would be impracticable. They form, even now, a large volume. The me-

thod of instruction adopted in them is, therefore, this :—the rule is given : the doctrine is stated : examples are brought forward—cases in point, which illustrate the rule and the doctrine : and this is found sufficient for every upright and humble mind.

Idem, p. 296.

The simple and unprejudiced study of the Bible is the death of religious extravagance. Many read it under a particular bias of mind. They read books, written by others under the same views. Their preaching and conversation run in the same channel. If they could awaken themselves from this state, and come to read the whole Scriptures from everything which they could find there, they would start as from a dream—amazed at the humble, meek, forbearing, holy, heavenly character of the simple religion of the Scriptures, to which, in a greater or less degree, their eyes had been blinded.

Idem, p. 297.

The right way of interpreting Scripture, is, to take it as we find it, without any attempt to force it into any particular system. Whatever may be fairly inferred from Scripture, we need not fear to insist on. Many passages speak the language of what is called Calvinism, and that in almost the strongest terms : I would not have a man clip and curtail these passages, to bring

them down to some system; let him go with them in their free and full sense; for, otherwise, if he do not absolutely pervert them, he will attenuate their energy. But, let him look at as many more, which speak the language of Arminianism, and let him go all the way with these also. God has been pleased thus to state and to leave the thing; and all our attempts to distort it one way or the other, are puny and contemptible.

Idem, p. 297.

A man may find much amusement in the Bible—variety of prudential instruction—abundance of sublimity and poetry: but, if he stops there, he stops short of its great end; for, the *testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*. The grand secret in the study of the Scriptures, is, to discover Jesus Christ therein, the way, the truth, and the life.

Idem, p. 298.

In reading the Scriptures, we are apt to think God farther removed from us, than from the persons to whom He spake therein: the knowledge of God will rectify this error: as if God *could* be farther from us than from them. In reading the Old Testament especially, we are apt to think that the things spoken there, in the prophet Hosea for instance, have little relation to us: the knowledge taught by Christian experience will rectify this error: as if reli-

gion were not always the *same sort* of transaction between God and the soul.

Idem, p. 298.

The Bible scorns to be treated scientifically. After all your accurate statements, it will leave you aground. The Bible does not come round and ask our opinion of its contents,—it proposes to us a constitution of Grace, which we are to receive, though we do not wholly comprehend it. Numberless questions may be started on the various parts of this constitution. Much of it I cannot understand, even of what respects myself; but I am called to act on it. And this is agreeable to analogy.

Idem, p. 299.

JOHN TILLOTSON, D.D.

Archbishop of Canterbury, an esteemed writer of Sermons, born at Sowerby, in Yorkshire, 1630—died 1694.

And now methinks I may with some confidence challenge any religion in the world to shew such a complete body and collection of holy and reasonable laws established upon such promises and threatenings as the Gospel contains. And if any man can produce a religion that can reasonably pretend to an equal or a greater confirmation than the Gospel hath, a religion the precepts and promises whereof are calculated to make men wiser and better, more temperate, more chaste, more meek and more patient, more

kind and more just, than the laws and motives of Christianity are apt to make men ; if any man can produce such a religion, I am ready to be of it. Let but any man shew me any book in the world, the doctrines whereof have the seal of such miracles as the Scriptures hath ; a book which contains the heads of our duty so perfectly, and without the mixture of any thing that is unreasonable, or vicious, or anyways unworthy of God ; that command us every thing in reason to be done, and abridgeth us no lawful pleasure without offering us abundant recompense for our self-denial ; a book the rules whereof, if they were practised, would make men more pious and devout, more holy and sober, more just and fair in their dealings, better friends and better neighbours, better magistrates and better subjects, and better in all relations, and which does offer to the understanding of men more powerful arguments to persuade them to be all this ; let any man, I say, shew me such a book, and I will lay aside the Scripture and preach from that.

Works, 12 vols. 8vo. London, 1757, p. 148.

CHARLES BONNET.

An eminent natural philosopher, F.R.S., and Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, born at Geneva, 1720—died 1793.

I examine this book with all the attention of which I am capable ; and I freely own, that the

more I examine it, the more I am struck with the characteristics of truth, the originality, and sublimity which I discover.

This book appears to me unexampled, and absolutely inimitable. The sublimity of thought, the majesty and simplicity of expression ; the beauty, the purity, I could almost say the homogeneity of the doctrine ; the importance, the universality, and the expressive brevity and paucity of the precepts ; their admirable appropriation to the nature and wants of man ; the ardent charity which so generously enforces the observation of them ; the affecting piety, force, and gravity of the composition ; the profound and truly philosophical sense which I discover in it ; these are the characters which fix my attention to the book I examine, and which I do not meet with, in the same degree, in any production of the human mind. I am equally affected with the candour, the ingenuousness, the modesty, I should have said, the humility, of the writers, and that unexampled and constant forgetfulness of themselves, which never admits their own reflections, or the smallest eulogium in reciting the actions of their master.

When I remark the plain, simple, and dispassionate account given by these writers of the greatest events, never attempting to astonish their readers, but endeavouring always to enlighten and convince them, I am irresistibly led to believe, that their only view was that of attest-

ing to mankind a truth which they conceived of the highest importance to human happiness.

Regardless of themselves, they seem full only of that great truth which they promulgated : I am not surprised, therefore, to find truth the only object which they have studied in their composition. This they exhibit unadorned, unembellished ; their language therefore is simple —“ The leper stretched forth his hand, and it became whole ” —“ The sick man took up his bed and walked.”

The distinguishing characteristics of the true sublime appear in these writings ; for when God is the object, it is sublime to say, “ He spake and it was done ; ” but it is easily discerned that the sublime occurs there only because the thing was of an extraordinary nature, and because the writer delivered it as he saw it, that is, as it was. These writers appear to me not only most completely ingenuous, for they do not even dissemble their own weakness ; but I am still more astonished when they do not even dissemble certain circumstances and sufferings of their master, which have no tendency to enhance his glory in the eyes of the world. Had they been silent as to these circumstances, their adversaries assuredly could never have discovered them, nor consequently have taken advantage of them. They have, however, not failed to relate them, and with all the minutest circumstances. It is impossible, therefore, not to feel that the purport of their

writing was to bear testimony to the truth. Is it possible, I say to myself, that these fishermen, who are supposed to perform actions not less astonishing than those of their master; who say to the lame man, "Rise up and walk!" and he walked! is it possible that these fishermen should be so destitute of vanity, that they should disdain the applauses of the people who were spectators of these prodigies?

My surprise and admiration, therefore, are equal, when I read these words, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" In so characteristic a mark, can I mistake the expression of humility, disinterestedness, and truth? When I read these words my affections are raised, and they excite emotions in my soul.

Who then are these men, who, whilst nature is obedient to their voice, are fearful that this obedience should be attributed to their power or piety? How should the mind refuse its assent to such witnesses? How is it possible to suspect such narrations to be mere inventions? and how many more circumstances of the same nature do I discover, which are inseparably connected with these, and which were not at all more likely to present themselves naturally to the minds of these men?

Philosophical and Critical Inquiries concerning Christianity; Trans. by J. L. Boisser. 8vo. Lond. 2d Ed. p. 89.

I apply myself to the only pure source of all doctrinal truth, I attentively consider that admirable book, which strengthens and increases my hopes ; I endeavour to find the true interpretation of it in itself, and not in the dreams and visions of certain commentators : I compare text with text, doctrine with doctrine, each writer with himself, all the writers together, and the whole with the most evident principles of reason ; and, having finished this serious, impartial, long-continued, and often-repeated examination, I find the supposed contradictions disappear, the shades grow weaker, light breaking forth from the midst of darkness, and faith frequently uniting with reason, sometimes soaring above it, but never standing in direct opposition to its dictates.

Idem, p. 290-1.

Thus have I considered, in a philosophical light, the principal proofs of that revelation, which reason pointed out to me, as necessary to the happiness of mankind. I review those proofs distinctly in my own mind ; I weigh them over again. I do not allow them to be separated ; I take them collectively ; I view them together ; I evidently see that they form a *whole*, and that each principal proof is an essential part of this whole. I discover a subordination, a connection, a harmony between all the parts, and a tendency in each to one common centre. I place myself in that centre, and thus receive the various

impressions which arise from all the points of the circumference. I feel the effect of each particular impression, and that of the whole. I unfold the particular effects, I compare them together, and the general effect of this combination of evidence acts most forcibly on my mind.

I perceive then, that this powerful effect on the mind and heart would be almost annihilated, if, instead of taking the proofs collectively, I took each of them separately, and did not unite them together; the effect would still grow weaker, if I reduced these principles to miracles alone.

My method is natural, and seems to come to the point by the shortest line. I will here briefly recapitulate it:—After having laid my foundations in the physical and moral constitutions of man, as it is known to us by experience and reasoning, my business was first to inquire, whether it was consistent with the analogy of this constitution, that man, by the sole force of his reason, should arrive at a sufficient certainty respecting his future destiny? And, as it appeared evident to me that this was not possible, it was natural to inquire, in the next place, whether the Creator of man could not afford him this desirable certainty, without changing his present constitution. This great question led me, by a road no less philosophical than direct, to the subject of the miracles; for the question was, first, to examine, whether God

himself had spoken ; then, how he had spoken ; by whom, and to whom he had spoken, &c.

But as agreeably to my principles, miracles are nothing more than a particular species of language, and that language is nothing more than a collection of signs, which by themselves have no signification ; I was then to consider the design or object of this extraordinary language, which it seemed to me that the legislator of nature had addressed to mankind. I was to consider also the moral character of those extraordinary men who had been commissioned to interpret this language to mankind, the prophecies which had foretold the mission of a celestial messenger, and the success of his mission, &c.

By thus bringing together, and comparing, the *external* and *internal* proofs of Christianity, this important consequence results to my mind ; —there exists no ancient history so well attested, as that of Christ ; —that there are no historical facts established on so great a number of proofs ; or proofs so solid, so striking, and so various, as those on which the divine messenger is founded.

Idem, p. 292, *et seq.*

WILLIAM COLLINS.

An excellent English Poet, was born at Chichester 1720—
died 1756.

After his return from France the writer of this character paid him a visit at Islington, where he was waiting for his sister, whom he

had directed to meet him ; there was nothing of disorder discernible in his mind by any but himself ; but he had withdrawn from study, and travelled with no other book than the English Testament, such as children carry to school ; when his friend took it out of his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a man of letters had chosen, “ I have but one book,” said Collins, “ but that is the best.”

Johnson's Lives of the Poets.

ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

A dissenting Divine, eminent for his general talents, particularly in poetry, was born at Southampton, 1676—died 1748.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE BIBLE.

Great God, with wonder and with praise,
On all thy works I look ;
But still thy wonder, power, and grace,
Shine brightest in thy Book.

The stars, that in their courses roll,
Have much instruction given ;
But thy Good Word informs my soul
How I may climb to heaven.

The fields provide me food, and show
The goodness of the Lord ;
But fruits of life and glory grow
In thy most Holy Word.

Here are my choicest treasures hid,
Here my best comfort lies ;
Here my desires are satisfy'd,
And hence my hopes arise.

Lord, make me understand thy law ;
Show what my thoughts have been ;
And from thy Gospel let me draw
Pardon for all my sin.

Here would I learn how Christ had dy'd
To save my soul from hell ;
Not all the books on earth beside
Such heavenly wonders tell.

Then let me love my Bible more,
And take a fresh delight
By day to read these wonders o'er,
And meditate by night.

Poems and Divine Songs.

FRANCIS PETRARCH.

A highly distinguished Italian Poet, and in fact one of the most celebrated characters in Literary History, was born in Tuscany, 1304—died 1374.

In all things that which is a little for one is too much for another ; and therefore, a wise man seeketh not quantity but sufficiency : for the one of these is many times hurtful, the other always profitable. I have an inestimable number of books ! What thousands composed the libraries of Ptolemy, and the Alexandrian col-

lection, which were all consumed. The great praise of Ptolemy, as I deem, was, his causing the Holy Scriptures, with great travel and charge to be translated out of the Hebrew into the Greek tongue: not that I censure the collections of great men, but say, that were all books to be destroyed, this one, retained, would be a greater treasure than all the millions put together that ever were published by mortal man. But it is a great mark of distinction to be the possessor of a numerous store of books. Truly, it is a great inheritance: sufficient for many wits, but well able to overthrow one. Sammonicus, who was a man of wonderful knowledge, gave when he died, to Gordianus the younger, from the friendship he bore his father, three-score and two thousand books; and this disposition of them was as much superior to all the learning they contained, as gratitude and friendship exceed all the forms of laboured study. But it might be study that led him to this act of virtue: well advised study leads to all virtue. As for such a quantity of books, I pray thee if this good man had done nothing else in all his lifetime, if he had never written any thing, nay, had he never read a single book, would he not have had, dost thou think, business enough to know what the books were; their titles, their names, the authors, and number of the volumes; so that instead of being a philosopher, he would have been a bookkeeper. But with many books

many opinions are to be learned : yes, truly ; and with them many errors, and much wicked knowledge ; some repugnant to nature, to equity, and to good manners ; some opposite to the liberal sciences, to the truth of things really done in history, to virtue, godliness, and the Holy Scriptures : and where so many matters are handled, and falsehood is so intermingled with the speciousness of truth, the discerning of the latter becomes more hard and dangerous.

View of Human Life, translated from the Latin by Mrs. Dodson, 8vo. London, 1797, p. 87—90.

SIR MARTYN COGNET, KNT.

One of the French King's Privy Council, Master of Requests of his Household, and Ambassador to the Cantons of Switzerland.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURE THE RULE FOR ALL THINGS.

It was very wisely written by *Aristotle* that *in reading of historics a man muste not be of too quicke a beliefe, nor too incredulous, for feare he take not false for true, or els profit no whit at all.* And what color or disguising so ever, men set on to flatter great ones, they which pried narrowly into behaviours, and take their counsels and actions in time of peace and war, are not deceived : and discerne toyes, and cavillings amidst deepe counsels, and do discover pretexts, cloaking, and occasions, with the true causes never having their judgement there deceived,

referring and examining all things to the rule of the Holy Scripture.

Politique Discourses upon Trueth and Lying; Translated by Sir Edward Hoby, Knight, 4to. London, 1586, p. 72.

As we are curious to preserve the health of our bodie, through the receites which are given and prescribed unto us by phisitians or experience, and so abstayne from meates and excesse, which may offende or alter the same, it is more required at our hands to remayne in the trueth, and to have a greater desire and care to preserve the health of our soules, diligently observing all the rules which God the Soverayne Phisitian of all prescribeth to us; and taking great heede on the other side that we shunne and avoyde whatsoever he hath forbidden. And if we be carefull to seeke out, those remedies which nature, art, and experience present unto us to preserve the health of our bodie, much more ought we to drawe, and sucke out of the Holy Scriptures and histories, that which formeth, dresseth, teacheth, deviseth, reformeth, and healeth the most noble and excellent part of us, which prepareth and strengtheneth us at all assayes, to receive and carrie with great contentment and hope (God assisting) whatsoever may befall unto us in this life.

Idem, p. 225.

SIR MATTHEW HALE.

Lord Chief Justice of England, a most learned Lawyer and upright and pious Judge ; born at Alderley in Gloucestershire, 1609—died 1676.

Every morning read seriously and reverently a portion of the Holy Scriptures, and acquaint yourself with the history and doctrine thereof ; it is a book full of light and wisdom, will make you wise to eternal life, and furnish you with directions and principles, to guide and order your life safely and prudently.

Letters to his Children.

There is no book like the Bible for excellent learning, wisdom, and use.

Simpson's Plea for Religion.

WILLIAM THOMPSON, M.A.

Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, and Dean of Raphoe, in Ireland—died about 1766.

WRITTEN IN THE HOLY BIBLE.

Thou Sacred Tome, be my unerring guide,
 Dove-hearted saints, and prophets eagle-ey'd !
 I scorn the moral fop and ethic sage,
 But drink in truth from your illumin'd page :
 Like Moses' bush, each leaf divinely bright,
 Where God invests Himself in milder light !
 Taught by your doctrines we devoutly rise,
 Faith points the way, and Hope unbars the skies,

You tune our passions, teach them how to roll,
 And sink the body but to raise the soul;
 To raise it, bear it, to mysterious day,
 Nor want an angel to direct the way!

Poems on Several Occasions.

HENRY JOHN TODD, D.D.

Archdeacon of Cleaveland.

Instead of being *impatient* for a revision of the present text, instead of regarding what has been lately called “an improved one” with any other feeling than that of indignation against presumptuous ignorance, we shall take up THE BOOK, which from our infancy we have known and loved, with increased delight, and resolve not hastily to violate, in regard to itself; the rule which it records “FORSAKE NOT AN OLD FRIEND, FOR THE NEW IS NOT COMPARABLE TO HIM.”

Vindication of the Present Authorised Version of the Bible, p. 83.

REV. JOHN MASON.

Rector of Water-Stratford, Bucks—died 1694.

What eye e’er pierced the Almighty’s sacred
 breast?

Himself knows only what will please Him best.
 Since man was made to serve his Maker’s will,
 Which is an height transcending human skill,
 A rule must needs be granted from on high
 For him to regulate his actions by;

This heaven-sprung rule that Sacred Roll contains,

Which in the consecrated land remains.

Its words and mysteries are all divine,

And weighty mountains hang on every line ;

It, sun-like, shines by its own golden beams,

And scorns its base co-rivals' senseless dreams.

Those spangles which the heathen sages left,

Were from this mine snatch'd by an honest theft.

Give me that hardy brow that dares deny

The Bible's well attested history.

Moses said many things, and proved them too.

With proofs, which all hell's magick did out-do ;

God's power he carried in his hands, to show

That from his mouth the truths of God did flow,

And his credentials on his face did shine,

Which there were written by a beam divine.

The gazing Jews were struck, who plainly saw,

That whence he had his light, he had his law.

Those sections, which the Sacred Code begin,

Were by an age of wonders usher'd in ;

The prophet's superstructure firmly stands

On two hewn stones laid by the Almighty's hands ;

They count the footsteps of their coming Lord,

They view the mercy-seat with one accord ;

One tells his name, another tells his place,

Another writes the beauties of his face ;

Thus is He glanced at by their piercing eyes,

The last of them his harbinger espies.

And O the brisk, the charming airs, that spring
From the consent of each harmonious string !
He's over-wise who dreads fictitious lines
From hands unbribed, and hearts without designs ;

They wrote beyond themselves, which serves to
prove

Their hearts and hands were guided from above.
The world's just age, and what was done of old,
Are in the Sacred Register enroll'd ;
Here may be seen the pristine state of man,
And (that Nile's head) the source where ills
began ;

Here may be seen what makes a second spring ;
Here is the best account of every thing.

The wonders witness'd now by mortal eyes,
Are but the products of its prophecies ;
The Scriptures rule the world ; till this shall
burn,

All ages on their axle-tree shall turn.

This heaven-inspired volume doth avow
What reason may embrace, or must allow.
When God describes himself, 'tis such an height
As far surmounts quick fancie's highest flight ;
'Tis reason, reason should be puzzled here ;
Man should be God if he knew what he were :
To these vast heights thus sober reason saith,
" I see the seals, and yield the chair to faith."
Now, the Almighty's word shall reptiles slight,
When heaven and earth bear witness to his
might ?

Vast numbers from his word at first did flow,
 And must his word pass for a cypher now ?
 Nay, his commands at first creations were,
 And now his word commands and gives an ear :
 It is a sun that gives both light and eyes,
 A voice that bids, and makes the dead arise ;
 It makes clouds, stars, and sends them to the
 sky ;
 And turneth heaven into a colony.

Unbelief is not reason, but a lust ;
 God's hand and sword gives it its mortal thrust ;
 The law of the two tables will prevail,
 When other self-invented means shall fail ;
 Whilst other archers level in the dark,
 The arrows from God's quiver hit the mark.
 What voices, or what visions, would you have ?
 God's voice, or nothing, will your brethren save ;
 New methods of salvation to contrive,
 Is fruitless labour ; let them hear and live.
 If preachers raised by God they will disdain,
 Preachers raised from the grave would preach in
 vain.

*Spiritual Songs ; or Songs of Praise, with Penitential
 Cries to Almighty God, upon Several Occasions, &c.*

MRS. HESTER CHAPONE.

An ingenious English Lady, was born in Northamptonshire,
 1727—died 1801.

This Sacred Volume must be the rule of your
 life. In it you will find all truths necessary to
 be believed ; and plain and easy directions, for

the practice of every duty: your Bible then must be your chief study and delight: but, as it contains many various kinds of writing—some parts obscure and difficult of interpretation, others plain and intelligible to the meanest capacity—I would chiefly recommend to your frequent perusal such parts of the Sacred Writings as are most adapted to your understanding, and most necessary for your instruction. Our Saviour's precepts were spoken to the common people amongst the Jews; and were therefore given in a manner easy to be understood, and equally striking and instructive to the learned and unlearned: for the most ignorant may comprehend them, whilst the wisest must be charmed and awed, by the beautiful and majestic simplicity with which they are expressed. Of the same kind are the Ten Commandments, delivered by God to Moses; which, as they were designed for universal laws, are worded in the most concise and simple manner, yet with a majesty, which commands our utmost reverence.

I think you will receive great pleasure, as well as improvement, from the historical books of the Old Testament—provided you read them as an history, in a regular course, and keep the thread of it in your mind, as you go on. I know of none, true or fictitious, that is equally wonderful, interesting, and affecting; or that is told in so short and simple a manner as this, which is, of all histories, the most authentic.

In my next letter, I will give you some brief directions, concerning the method and course I wish you to pursue, in reading the Holy Scriptures. May you be enabled to make the best use of this most precious gift of God—this sacred treasury of knowledge ! May you read the Bible, not as a task, nor as the dull employment of that day only in which you are forbidden more lively entertainments—but, with a sincere and ardent desire of instruction ; with that love and delight in God's word, which the holy Psalmist so pathetically felt, and described, and which is the natural consequence of loving God and virtue !

Letters on the Improvement of the Mind. 12mo. Lond. 1786, p. 14—16.

We come now to that part of Scripture, which is the most important of all ; and which you must make your constant study, not only till you are thoroughly acquainted with it, but all your life long ; because, how often soever repeated, it is impossible to read the life and death of our blessed Saviour, without renewing and increasing in our hearts that love, and reverence, and gratitude towards him, which is so justly due for all he did, and suffered, for us ! Every word that fell from his lips is more precious than all the treasures of the earth ; for his “are the words of eternal life !” They must therefore be laid up in your heart, and con-

stantly referred to on all occasions, as the rule and direction of all your actions; particularly those very comprehensive moral precepts he has graciously left with us, which can never fail to direct us aright, if fairly and honestly applied: such as “whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.” There is no occasion, great or small, on which you may not safely apply this rule, for the direction of your conduct: and, whilst your heart honestly adheres to it, you can never be guilty of any sort of injustice or unkindness. The two great commandments, which contain the summary of our duty to God and man, are no less easily retained, and made a standard by which to judge our own hearts—“To love the Lord our God, with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our strength; and our neighbour (or fellow creature) as ourselves.”

Idem, p. 38—40.

May heaven direct you in studying this sacred volume, and render it the means of making you wise unto salvation! May you love and reverence, as it deserves, this blessed and invaluable book, which contains the best rule of life, the clearest declaration of the will and laws of the Deity, the reviving assurance of favour to true penitents, and the unspeakable joyful tidings of eternal life and happiness to all the truly

virtuous, through Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Deliverer of the world !

Idem, p. 57.

JOHN LEWIS, M. A.

A Learned English Divine and Antiquary; born in Bristol, 1675—died 1746.

This is the account which I have been able to give of the several translations of the Bible and New Testament into the ancient and modern English tongue, and of their most remarkable editions in print. From whence, I suppose, any one will infer the great honour and esteem that these Holy Books were always had in by our Christian ancestors; since they were so very desirous to have them, and to know and understand their contents, as to spare no cost or pains, but to run the hazard of even their lives and fortunes, and not to count them dear, so that they might but procure the free use of these books, and have the advantage of perusing them. The great number of the copies of them, however of the New Testament, in manuscript or writing before printing was invented, wrote with the utmost accuracy and exactness; and the many editions of them since printing came in use, is a demonstration of the great value put on them by the Christians here in England, and that every one who could read took care to purchase and have a Bible or Testament in the tongue

wherein he was born. This, no doubt, will be thought a very great reproach to the professed Christians of the present age, and but too good an argument of their having lost their first love, and being no wise earnest for the faith delivered to the saints or Christians in these holy books; since, to our shame be it spoken, whatever reputation the Holy Bible has *been* had in, it is *now* treated with the utmost slight and neglect, and is scarce any where read but in our churches. So far are too many of our modern Christians here in England from reading this book, meditating on it, and letting the sense of it dwell richly or abundantly in them, that, every body knows, the writings of the most silly and trifling authors are often preferred, and read with greater pleasure and delight. What surer sign can be given, that we have a name that we live and are dead? And consequently, that unless we remember from whence we are fallen, and repent, and do the first works, the great Author and Finisher of our faith will come unto us quickly, and will remove our candlestick out of his place! *Sed Deus avertat omen.*

Complete History of the Several Translations of the Holy Bible and New Testament. 8vo. London, 1739, p. 375.

JOHN D'ISRAELI, ESQ.

Author of the *Curiosities of Literature*, &c.

It appears by an Act dated in 1516, that in those days the Bible was called *Bibliotheca*,

that is, *per emphasim*, the Library. The word library was limited in its signification then to the Biblical writings; no other books compared with the Holy Writings appear to have been worthy to rank with them, or constitute what we call a library.

Curiosities of Literature.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

An eminent Poet and Classical Writer; born 1672, at Milstone, Wiltshire, of which place his father (Lancelot Addison) was rector—died 1719.

The Scriptures are full of pathetic and warm pictures of the condition of an happy or miserable futurity; and, I am confident, that the frequent reading of them would make the way to an happy eternity so agreeable and pleasant, that he who tries it will find the difficulties which he before suffered in shunning the allurements of vice, absorpt in the pleasure he will take in the pursuit of virtue; and, how happy must that mortal be, who thinks himself in the favour of an Almighty, and can think of death as a thing which it is an infirmity not to desire?

Guardian, No. XX.

JOHN MILTON.

His name is a synonyme for vastness of attainment, sublimity of conception, and splendour of expression.

And if any man incline to think I undertake a task too difficult for my years, I trust through

the supreme enlightening assistance far otherwise : for my years, be they few or many, what imports it ? So they bring reason, let that be looked on : and for the task, from hence that the question in hand is so needful to be known at this time chiefly by every meaner capacity, and contains in it the explication of many admirable and heavenly privileges reached out to us by the gospel, I conclude the task must be easy : God having to this end ordained his gospel to be the revelation of his power and wisdom in Christ Jesus. And this is one depth of his wisdom, that he could so plainly reveal so great a measure of it to the gross distorted apprehension of decayed mankind. Let others, therefore, dread and shun the Scriptures for their darkness ; I shall wish I may deserve to be reckoned among those who admire and dwell upon them for their clearness.

*The Reason of Church Government
urged against Prelacy, 1641.*

True religion is the true worship and service of God, learnt and believed from the Word of God only. No man or angel can know how God would be worshipped and served, unless God reveal it : he hath revealed and taught it us in the Holy Scriptures by inspired ministers, and in the gospel by his own Son and his apostles, with strictest command, to reject all other traditions or additions whatsoever. Ac-

according to that of St. Paul, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema, or accursed." And Deut. iv. 2: "Ye shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish aught from it." Rev. xxii. 18, 19: "If any man shall add," &c. "If any man shall take away from the words," &c. With good and religious reason therefore all protestant churches with one consent, and particularly the church of England in her thirty-nine articles, art. 6th, 19th, 20th, and 21st, and elsewhere, maintain these two points, as the main principles of true religion; that the rule of true religion is the Word of God only: and that their faith ought not to be an implicit faith, that is to believe, though as the church believes, against or without express authority of Scripture.

Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, &c., 1673.

TIMOTHY DWIGHT, S.T.D., LL.D.

President of Yale College, Connecticut, 1795.

It has been remarked at the time of his accession to the presidency, infidelity was fashionable and prevalent in the college. To extirpate a spirit so pernicious and fatal, he availed himself of an early and decisive opportunity. Forensic disputation was an important exercise of the senior class. For this purpose

they were formed into a convenient number of divisions; two of which disputed before him every week, in the presence of the other members of the class, and of the resident graduates. It was the practice of each division to agree upon several questions, and then refer them to the President to select which he thought proper. Until this time through a mistaken policy, the students had not been allowed to discuss any questions which involved the inspiration of the Scriptures: from an apprehension that the examination of these points would expose them to the contagion of Scepticism. As infidelity was extensively prevalent in the state and in the country, the effect on the minds of the students had been unhappy. It had led them to believe, that their instructors were afraid to meet the question fairly; and that Christianity was supported by authority and not by argument. One of the questions presented by the first division was this; "*Are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament the Word of God?*" To their surprise the President selected it for discussion: told them to write on which side they pleased, as he should not impute to them any sentiments which they advanced as their own, and requested those who should write on the negative side of the question, to collect and bring forward all the facts, and arguments which they could produce: in-joining it upon them, however, to treat the

subject with becoming respect and reverence. Most, if not all, of the members of the division came forward as the champions of infidelity. When they had finished the discussion, he first examined the ground they had taken; triumphantly refuted their arguments; proved to them that their statement of facts was mistaken, or irrelevant; and, to their astonishment, convinced them, that their acquaintance with the subject was wholly superficial. After this he entered into a strain of powerful argument and animated eloquence, which nothing could resist. The effect upon the students was electrical. From that moment Infidelity was not only without a stronghold, but without a lurking-place. To espouse her cause was now as unpopular, as before it had been to profess a belief in Christianity. Unable to endure the exposure of arguments, she fled from the retreats of learning ashamed and disgraced.

*Theology Explained and Defended;
with the Author's Life. Vide Life.*

JOHN FAWCETT, D.D.

We can scarcely take this Sacred Volume into our hands before we are convinced of its intrinsic excellence. The history, the morality, and the theology of the Bible, contain a fund of knowledge and instruction, bearing the evident marks of superior wisdom and sagacity. But it is the idea of its being written with the finger

of God, that puts life into the whole. The broad seal of Heaven is stamped on it in such a manner, that the united powers of earth and hell have never been able to deface it. It is this that gives certainty to facts and to future hopes. This clothes the precepts and counsels here given with dignity and authority. This raises the doctrines of the Bible infinitely above the speculations and conjectures of the wisest heathen writers, inspires its devotions with liveliness and energy, infuses divine sweetness into its promises, and, in a word, casts upon it a sublime and inimitable grandeur.

Let the pious reader peruse this Holy Book with the great God before his eyes, and he cannot fail of being instructed, entertained and edified. At every step he takes, new light will break in upon his mind, and new sources of hope and joy will open to his faith. It is of great importance to be well established in the belief of the divine authority of these sacred records. The deeds by which we hold our estates will be consulted with little pleasure or advantage, while we have reason to suspect their authenticity. It ought, therefore, to be matter of great joy to us, that he who has settled an eternal inheritance upon us, has taken care that there should be no flaw in the instrument of conveyance.

O reader beware therefore of that bold indifference with which this book is treated by too

many who are favoured with it. Something more is required of you, than a general regard to it. It will be to little purpose that you cast your eye now and then upon it, to gratify curiosity, or merely as a matter of course. As God enables you, read it with the utmost care. If it is the word of the living God, you cannot pay too serious and solemn attention to it. Read it under the settled idea of its containing the words of everlasting life, and you will be anxious to enter into its true meaning and spirit. Read it regularly at stated seasons; in such portions, and in such order, as may be most conducive to your edification. Consider it in its connexion, apply it to yourself, compare it with the feelings of your own heart, with the observations you daily make upon mankind, and the events which are continually rising to your view.

Read this Book, not barely for your amusement, but that you may know the things which belong to your peace, and be made wise to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Read it for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. Read it with the solemnities of death, judgment, and eternity before your eyes, and let the reading of this book be always accompanied with earnest aspirations after the teachings of the Divine Spirit; fervently beseeching God to take away the veil of prejudice from your eyes, to give you the knowledge of

divine truth in its native simplicity and glory, and to bless you with a humble, teachable and child-like disposition. Read it with a sincere desire and aim, through divine grace, to have your whole temper and walk conformable unto it.

The Apostle Paul calls the whole of the inspired writings, the word of Christ. Col. iii. 16. He thereby asserts the value of the book, and the divinity of its author; and says, "Let it dwell in you;" not make a short stay, or an occasional visit, but take a fixed and stated residence; let it dwell richly in the largest measure, and with the greatest efficacy; so as to fill the memory, sway the will, and influence all the affections.

The Devotional Family Bible,
2 vols. 4to. Lond. 1811. Address.

WILLIAM GURNEY, M.A.

Rector of St. Clement Danes, Strand, &c. &c.

No volumes equally deserve our attentive perusal as the inspired Oracles of God. By these men live, and in them is the life of our soul. They are the inestimable Testament of God our Saviour; the blessed means of all true and spiritual wisdom, holiness, comfort, and eternal felicity. Let us then daily search the Scriptures, and understand what we read; for these are they that testify of Christ. Since they are one of the most valuable talents com-

mitted to us, and for which we must give an account at that great day of the Lord, let us with all our getting get the understanding of them, let us hide them in our hearts, believing what they assert, receiving what they offer, and doing whatsoever they command us.

Diamond Dictionary of the Holy Bible. 12mo. Lond. 1836. Preface.

REV. WILLIAM HAMMOND,

Of St. John's College, Cambridge.

READING THE SCRIPTURES.

JESU, thy Word is my delight,
When thy rich grace is seen ;
I read and study day and night,
And meditate therein.

The Gospel, as a polish'd glass,
Thy glory lets us see ;
We look therein and see thy face,
And we are made like Thee.

When into darkness I am brought,
JESU, when Thou art gone,
Vain is thy Word—it strikes me not,
My heart is like a stone.

Alas ! how blind, how deaf am I !
I cannot see nor hear.
Give me, O LORD, the seeing eye ;
Give me the hearing ear.

O Lamb of God, the Book unseal;
 Inspire the letter dead;
 Let me the life and spirit feel,
 And there my own name read.

Shew me that Thou for me didst die;
 That Thou for me didst live;
 The promises to me apply,
 And grace and glory give.

*Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual
 Songs.* 12mo. Lond. 1745.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D.D.

Minister at Northampton; an eminent Dissenting Divine.
 Born 1702—died at Lisbon, 1751.

Above all, consider the design and tendency of the New Testament. See to what it will lead you, and all those who cordially obey it; and then say, whether it be not good. And consider, how naturally its truth is connected with its goodness. Trace the character and sentiments of its authors, whose living image (if I may be allowed the expression) is still preserved in their writings. And then, ask your own heart, Can you think this was a forgery, an impious cruel forgery? For such it must have been, if it were a forgery at all; a scheme to mock God, and to ruin men, even the best of men, such as revered conscience, and would abide all extremities for what they apprehended to be truth. Put the question to your own heart, Can I in my conscience believe

it to be such an imposture? Can I look up to an omniscient God, and say, "O Lord, thou knowest that it is in reverence to thee, and in love to truth and virtue, that I reject this book, and the method to happiness here laid down."

But there are difficulties in the way.—And what then? Have those difficulties never been cleared? Go to the living advocates for Christianity, to those of whose abilities, candour, and piety, you have the best opinion; if your prejudices will give you leave to have a good opinion of any such, tell them your difficulties; hear their solutions; weigh them seriously, as those who know they must answer it to God: and while doubts continue, follow the truth as far as it will lead you, and take heed that you do not "imprison it in unrighteousness," Rom. i. 18. Nothing appears more inconsistent and absurd, than for a man solemnly to pretend dissatisfaction with the evidences of the gospel, as a reason why he cannot in conscience be a thorough Christian; when yet at the same time he violates the most apparent dictates of reason and conscience, and lives in vices condemned even by the heathens.

If I cannot prevail here, but the pride of displaying a superiority of understanding should bear on such a reader, to do his utmost to trample down the gospel with contempt; I would, however, dismiss him with one proposal,

which I think the importance of the affair may fully justify. If you have done with your examination into Christianity, and determine to live and conduct yourself as if it were assuredly false, sit down then, and make a memorandum of that determination. Write it down : " On such a day of such a year, I deliberately resolved, that I would live and die rejecting Christianity myself, and doing all I could to overthrow it. This day I determined, not only to renounce all subjection to, and expectation from Jesus of Nazareth ; but also to make it a part of the business of my life, to destroy, as far as I possibly can, all regard to him in the minds of others ; and to exert my most vigorous efforts, in the way of reasoning or of ridicule, to sink the credit of his religion ; and, if it be possible, to root it out of the world ; in calm steady defiance of that day, when his followers say, he shall appear in so much majesty and terror, to execute the vengeance threatened to his enemies." Dare you write this, and sign it ? I firmly believe, that many a man, who would be thought a deist, and endeavours to increase the number, would not. And if you in particular dare not do it, whence does that small remainder of caution arise ? The cause is plain. There is in your conscience some secret apprehension, that this rejected, this opposed, this derided gospel, may after all prove true. And if there

be such an apprehension, then let conscience do its office.

Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.

WILLIAM CHILLINGWORTH.

A celebrated Divine of the Church of England; was born at Oxford, 1602—died 1644.

The BIBLE, I say the BIBLE only is the religion of Protestants. Whatsoever else they beleeve besides it, and the plaine irrefragible, indubitable consequences of it, well may they behold it as a matter of opinion, but as matter of faith and religion, neither can they with coherence to their own grounds beleeve it themselves, nor require the belief of it of others, without most high and most schismaticall presumption. I for my part, adds he, after a long (and as I verily beleeve and hope) impartiall search of the true way to eternall happiness, doe professe plainly that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot, but upon this rock only. I see plainly and with mine own eyes, that there are popes against popes, councells against councells, some fathers against others, the same fathers against themselves, a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age, the church of one age against the church of another age. Traditive interpretations of Scriptures are pretended, but there are few or none to be found;

No tradition but only of Scripture, can derive itself from the fountaine, but may be plainly prov'd either to have been brought in, in such an age after Christ; or that in such an age it was not in. In a word, there is no sufficient certaintie but of Scripture only, for any considering man to build upon. This therefore, and this only I have reason to beleieve; this I will professe, according to this I will live, and for this I will not only willingly, but even gladly loose my life, though I should be sorry that Christians should take it from me. Propose me any thing out of this book, and require whether I beleieve it or no, and seeme it never so incomprehensible to humane reason, I will subscribe it hand and heart, as knowing no demonstration can be stronger than this, God hath said so, therefore it is true. In other things I will take no man's libertie of judgment from him; neither shall any man take mine from me. I will think no man the worse man, nor the worse Christian. I will love no man the lesse, for differing in opinion with me. And what measure I meat to others I expect from them againe. I am fully assured that God does not, and therefore that men ought not to require any more of any man than this, to beleieve the Scripture to be God's Word, to endeavour to finde the true sense of it, and to live according to it.

This is, pursues he, the religion which I have

chosen after a long deliberation, and I am verily persuaded that I have chosen wisely, much more wisely than if I had guided my self according to your churches authoritie. For the Scriptures being all true, I am secured by beleiving nothing else, that I shall beleve no falshood as matter of faith. And if I mistake the sense of Scripture, and so fall into errour, yet am I secure from any danger thereby, if but your grounds be true: because endeavouring to finde the true sense of Scripture, I cannot but hold my errour without pertinacy, and be readie to forsake it when a more true and a more probable sense shall appeare unto mee. And then all necessarie truth being, as I have prov'd, plainly set doune in Scripture, I am certaine by beleiving Scripture, to beleve all necessarie truth. And he that does so, if his life be answerable to his faith, how is it possible he should faile of salvation?

Historical and Critical Account of the Life and Writings of W. Chillingworth; by P. des Maizeaux. 8vo. London, 1725, p. 192, et seq.

THOMAS TUKE.

A Poet in the reign of Charles I.

Whil'st sunne doth shine, and does not burne,
Men willingly to it do turne :

But, if it once wax hot, they fly,
And hide themselves from't by and by.

So truth, that's pleasing, giving light,
Is grievous, if it once doe bite,
And oftentimes procures a foe,
Whereas base flattring does not so.
For man would have full scope in's wayes,
And gladly have of all men praise.
He would not be suppos'd to stray,
Although he be quite out of's way.
Truth's like hony, put to a sore,
Which makes the place to smart the more.
Of carnall mindes such is the case,
So faine they would hold on their race.
To be discover'd, fann'd, and tried,
Grieves them as much, as to be tied.
Yet welcome medicine, that does heale,
And welcome they, that truly deale.
Sore eyes indeed the light do shunne,
And batts, and owles love not the sunne ;
The thief delighteth in the night,
But honesty does love the light.
The honest heart, the single eye,
Is very loath to tread awry :
And therefore deemes the light full deare,
And him that speaks the truth, will heare.
It studies to be truly wise,
And would not (be) abus'd with lyes.
It therefore gives itself to pray,
To read, heare, search, both night and
day.
And when the truth it has found out,
To love't, and own't, it does not doubt.

Glory, and greatnesse, and feare, and shame,
 Gaine, that's so lov'd, and worldly fame,
 Carnall pleasure, and contentment,
 Friendship of men, to errors bent,
 The honest heart, the single eye,
 To truth doeth these things vilifie.
 Yea life, that is so dear to man
 To keepe the truth, forego it can.
 And that is truth, to be believed,
 Which from the Scriptures is derived,
 For that in faith makes but a breach
 Which Holy Scriptures do not teach.
 All teachers should their teachings square
 By them ; for they God's will declare.
 THEY fully shew the church, and truth lay out :
 To follow other guides is to stray out.
 They, they are Faith's perfit rule and measure,
 The touch-stone of truth, and matchlesse
 treasure.

Concerning the Holy Eucharist. 4to. 1636.

RICHARD BANCROFT.

Archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of James I; born in Lancashire, 1544—died 1610.

All are content to learne of their masters.
 Phisicians deale with matters of phisicke, and
 men of trade with their owne occupations.
 Onely the knowledge of the Scriptures is that
 which every man chalengeth to be skilfull in.
 Learned and unlearned, they take upon them to
 write. This art of the Scriptures the pratling

old woman, the doating old man, the babling sophister, and generally al men, presume they have obtained, when it is far otherwise ; they teare it in peeces, and take upon them to teach it before they have learned it.

Sermon preached at Paul's Cross, 1588.

JACOB ABBOTT,

Principal of the Mount Vernon School, Boston, America.

The Bible is a history of the redemption of man by Jesus Christ, and it is nothing more. From the beginning to the end of it, with a very few, if any, exceptions, it is nothing but that. Open at Genesis and follow on, chapter after chapter, and book after book, until you come to the final benediction in the last chapter of Revelation, it all bears upon this. Now, if this book was planned by the Supreme, and if he superintended its execution during the fifteen centuries while it was in progress, all this is easily accounted for, nothing else can account for it.

But I must show more fully that this is the single and simple aim of the Scriptures. Let us briefly review its contents. It begins by explaining simply and clearly the creation of the world, and God's design in creating it. His intention was to have a happy community to tenant it, who should be united in each other, and united to him ; forming one family of undivided hearts and aims, all interested in one com-

mon welfare, and all looking to him as to the common bond of union, and the common source of happiness. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and thy neighbour as thyself," was unquestionably the law originally written in the human heart.

Man sinned, however; they broke God's law, and the Bible then describes the dreadful consequence of sin in bringing suffering upon the human family.

It is observable, that in one of the very first chapters of the Bible, the coming of the Saviour is foretold; and from that time the sacred history marks out and follows with minute accuracy the line of succession which is to conduct us to that Saviour. There were a vast many nations on the earth at the time when the Israelites were in Egypt, whose history is far more important, in every respect but one, than is the history of the Jews. There were the Egyptians, the Assyrians, and the Persians. The sacred history neglects them all, and turns its whole attention to a body of Egyptian slaves, and why? Because among these slaves there was the ancestor of the coming Messiah.

The Young Christian's Religion.
12mo. Religious Tract Society.

THOMAS PALFREYMAN.

A Philosophical Writer in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth.

When we will seeme (earnestly, of love, and of

good will,) to give foorth our commendation and praise, to any kinde of writings that are highly excellent, very wise, wittie, godlie and necessarie: and meete also of all good men to be allowed, worthily imbraced, received and as gladly followed: we have to thinke, that in the way of comparison, we may most justly say, that unto us in our profession to God, there is no wisdome to appeare, no vertue, no good counsell, nor none example of godlie living to be accounted of, to be studied, to be learned, put in practise, picked out, and aptly followed of any man (whether of the writings of the auncient fathers, although they were holily inspired and good men: or yet of the philosophers or ethnicks, in th' order and style of their high wisdome and pithy writings) save only the most effectuous, most pithie in deed, most mightie, holie, and heavenlie worde of God, which worde, is the onely founteine of all perfection, of all wisdome, of all puritie, holinesse and trueth: and the onely worde of everlasting salvation, proceeding from the mouth of God himselfe, dispersed by his spirite of power into the only heartes of all his faithfull ministers, and so foorth into all the rest of his holie elect and chosen, and preserved in them by his only power, to his laude and praise, and to their endlesse joy for ever. For from that same very founteine onely (of all fulnesse, sweetnesse, and puritie) the most ancient and holie fathers that

ever lived, before, or since Christ, received there their moysture of grace, or the water by measure of true and perfect life. There received they their light of heavenly grace. There, in that large field of glorie, they moste reverently travelled and sought with diligence, the plaine pathway to the presence of God's majestie (Christe himselfe beeing the way, and his spirit possessing them, and guiding them thereunto). That onely indeed is the written word, wherein they and all God's elect, have ever (from the beginning) trusted to be saved. As for the writings of the philosophers or ethnicks, though they have not in them (by any meanes) the glorie and high majestie of the holie word of God: yet are they not utterly to be contemned, either too much abased and set at nought: for they have in them to shewe foorth (onely by the light and gifte of nature) a lovely shew: a goodly and faire face, both of wisdom, quicknesse of wit, yea and also of vertue, and the trade of honestie: and therefore the rather to bee well esteemed, and at all times to be delighted in and loved: but not altogether to be tarried upon to be leaned unto and followed, as the Holie Scriptures of God: or in any one jot to be compared to the Scriptures: for it must be said without either daunger or feare, that in comparison of them, their writings are to be noted but most blinde and foolish, and utterly to be rejected, and

as very baggage to be set at naught: because they write not by the motion and furtherance of a good spirit: namely the Spirit of God, but utterly to the contrarie by a light naturall and meer darknesse, or by a corrupted understanding, as is before partely noted. For they have not in them the true knowledge of God, nor of his sonne Jesus Christ: whome the godly truely knoweth, gladly obeyeth and followeth, and that by the onely light of the same worde.

The Treasure of Heaventie Philosophie.
4to. London, 1578. To the Reader.

The Word of God, even God himselfe, by whome
the worlde was made,
Eternall is, and guideth right, all thinges in happie
trade.

This Worde of strength, of life, and grace, whose
heavenly ioyes excell,
Came downe to earth, It tooke our fleshe, to save
our soules from hell.

This worde most true, al pure and cleane, from
good men may not slide,
For it as light, and life of soule, with them must
still abide.

Wey not the willes of wicked wights, which
laughe this Word to scorne,
Them it wil waste, and soone confound, as
damned and forlorn.

Idem, p. 34.

JOHN TODD,

Pastor of the first Congregational Church, Philadelphia.

The Bible is the great store-house of light and knowledge on spiritual subjects. Other books are the ladders and the scaffolding; this is the temple of truth. The rules which many give for the study of the Bible, seem to me too frequently to overlook one grand characteristic of the word of God :—*viz.* that as it required supernatural aid to write it, so it does also to understand it. The Spirit which dictated it, is necessary to understand it; and the Bible cannot be understood, and its true spirit apprehended, except by the mind which is led and sanctified by the Spirit of God. You must have the aid of this Spirit, or you open the word of God in vain. The letter killeth: the Spirit only maketh alive. In all your attempts, then, to understand the Bible, be sure to invoke the aid of Heaven. Ask, that in God's light, you may see light. Some look upon the Bible as a garden of spices, in which you may walk, and at your leisure pluck the flowers, and gather the fruits of the Eden of God. But this does not accord with my experience. I have found it more like a mine, in which you must dig and labour,—the wealth of which is not to be obtained without labour; a mine, rich in gold and precious things, but it must be wrought day and night in order to produce them. You must have times and

rules marked out, in which and by which you will dig this mine, remembering, that all that you bring out will be your own, and will be invaluable to you.

Sunday School Teacher, Preface by H. Althaus. 12mo. London, 1838. p. 167.

WILLIAM DERHAM, D.D., F.R.S.

Canon of Windsor, a most eminent Philosopher and Divine ;
was born near Worcester, 1657—died 1735.

Since the design of the Holy Writings is not to instruct men in philosophical, but divine matters, therefore it is not necessary to restrain the sense of those texts to the strict propriety of the words, but take them to be spoken according to the appearance of things and the vulgar notions and opinions which men have of them, not according to their reality, or philosophical verity. Thus in divers other instances the Holy Scriptures speak, and thus even philosophers themselves speak. Yea, the Copernicans themselves, altho' they professedly own, and defend the contrary ; yet in vulgar speaking in our present case, say, the sun riseth, setteth, and moveth, &c. making that to be the act of the sun in vulgar discourse, which they contend to be in reality performed by the earth. And if philosophers, and others did not thus express themselves according to the appearance of things, and men's vulgar apprehensions of them, it would need a comment, and they must

explain themselves every time they speak, in order to their being understood.

*Astro-Theology ; or a Demonstration
of the Being and Attributes of God.*

ALBERT DE HALLER.

A most eminent and indefatigable Physician, Anatomist, and Physiologist ; born at Berne in Switzerland, 1708 ; Professor in the University of Gottingen seventeen years—died 1777.

It is not, my dear child, my design to run over all the prophecies that have foretold a Messiah, a Prophet, a Redeemer, who was to make satisfaction for the sins of the world, and restore the kingdom of God. I shall content myself with referring to a few places in the ancient oracles, where the coming of our Saviour is predicted in very express terms.

But I must first surmise, that the antiquity of these Books, to which I allude, has never been disputed ; neither are the objections of any weight which have been urged against them. Three hundred years before the birth of Christ, all these Books were translated into the Greek language at Alexandria ; they were then very ancient ; but it is sufficient for our purpose to allege, that Jesus frequently appeals to them as to prophecies much older than himself, and with which the world abounded. Perhaps every one does not know in what manner the religion of the Jews was spread. It appears, from the writings of a satirical poet, the cotemporary

and favourite of the emperor Augustus, that at Rome, which was the common rendezvous of all nations, and in particular of men of rank and fortune, many persons scrupled to violate the Sabbath-day by any kind of work or labour. All the Jews had their public seminaries, and books of their law, both in Hebrew and Greek.

To this remark we must add, that we are removed some thousands of years from the time in which the Books to which I appeal were written. The manners of men, in the ages I speak of, their language, their expressions are very different from those which prevail in the western hemisphere which we inhabit. Many things were easy and intelligible to those people who were of warm and lively imaginations, which we cannot, without great difficulty, comprehend. Custom had given a determinate sense to many of their figures, which appear to us strange and unusual. Their oral tradition served likewise as an explication to divers things, which in the infancy of the arts and sciences were but seldom written, or set down in very few words.

It is, however, incontestable, that in the early ages, fallen man had the promise of a Redeemer. The sage Persians, and the Brachmans, whose writings have of late years been studied, spoke a long time since, and with confidence, of the future appearance of a Mediator. But what renders this general opinion the more credible, is, that the most ancient of all the prophecies

relates to this Redeemer so universally expected ; which prophecy is this—"that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head"—that serpent which had seduced the mother of mankind.

Letters to his Daughter. 12mo.

London, 1803, p. 99, *et seq.*

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

I walke many times into the pleasant fieldes of the Holye Scriptures, where I plucke up the goodliesome herbes of sentences by pruning : eate them by reading : chawe them by musing : and laie them up at length in the hie seate of memorie by gathering them together : that so having tasted theyr sweetenes I may the lesse perceave the bitternes of this miserable life.

Written on a blank leaf of a Portion of the New Testament, Translated by Lawrence Tomson. 12mo. bound in embroidered silk worked by Elizabeth when Princess ; presented to the Bodleian Library by Mr. Hinton of Islip, Oxon. E. Museo, 242.

JOHN DRYDEN.

An illustrious English Poet and miscellaneous writer ; born in Northamptonshire, 1631—died 1700.

Let all records of will reveal'd be shown ;
With Scripture all in equal balance thrown,
And our one Sacred Book will be that one.

Proof needs not here, for whether we compare

That impious, idle, superstitious ware
Of rites, 'lustrations, offerings, which before,
In various ages, various countries bore,
With Christian faith and virtues, we shall find
None answering the great ends of human kind
But this one rule of life, that shews us best
How God may be appeased, and mortals blest.
Whether from length of time its worth we draw,
The word is scarce more ancient than the law :
Heaven's early care prescrib'd for every age ;
First, in the soul, and after, in the page.
Or, whether more abstractedly we look,
Or on the writers, or the written Book,
Whence, but from heaven, could men unskilled
in arts,

In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths ; or how, or why
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lye ?
Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price.

If on the Book itself we cast our view,
Concurrent heathens prove the story true :
The doctrine, miracles ; which must convince,
For heav'n in them appeals to human sense ;
And though they prove not, they confirm the
cause,

When what is taught agrees with nature's laws.
Then for the stile, majestic and divine,
It speaks no less than God in every line :

Commanding words; whose force is still the same

As the first fiat that produc'd our frame.

All faiths beside, or did by arms ascend;

Or sense indulg'd has made mankind their friend:

This only doctrine does our lusts oppose:

Unfed by nature's soil, in which it grows;

Cross to our interests, curbing sense, and sin;

Oppress'd without, and undermin'd within,

It thrives through pain; its own tormentors
tires;

And with a stubborn patience still aspires.

To what can reason such effects assign

Transcending nature, but to laws divine?

Which in that Sacred Volume are contain'd

Sufficient, clear, and for that use ordain'd.

Religio Laici.

WILLIAM WAKE.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

An eminent Prelate; was born at Blandford, in Dorsetshire,
1657—died 1737.

Q. What was the second thing which your godfathers and godmothers promised in your name?

A. That I should believe all the articles of the Christian faith.

Q. Where are those articles to be found?

A. In the Holy Scriptures; and particularly in those of the New Testament.

Q. What mean you by the Holy Scriptures?

A. I mean those books, which thro' the assistance of the Holy Spirit, were written by Moses, and the prophets, under the law; and by the apostles and evangelists of Christ, since the publishing of the gospel; to direct us in the knowledge of God, and of the duty which he requires of us.

Q. How do you know what books were written by these persons, in order to these ends?

A. By the constant, universal, and undeniable testimony both of the Jewish and Christian church: from the former of which we have received the Scriptures of the Old: from the latter, those of the New Testament.

Q. How do you know that these books were written by the assistance of the Holy Spirit?

A. 1. By the authors who wrote them; who were doubtless no less inspired in what they wrote, than in what they taught, of the gospel of Christ.. 2. By the design of God in the composing of them; which was to leave thereby a constant, infallible *rule of faith* to the church in all ages of it. 3. By the opinion which all Christians from the time that they were published have had of them; and the deference which, upon that account, they have paid to them; and, lastly, by the subject-matter of them, and those internal marks of Divine wisdom, and piety, which are so conspicuous in all the parts of them.

Q. Do you look upon these Scriptures, as the only, present, rule of your faith ?

A. I do : nor is there any other certain foundation, on which to build it.

Q. What think you of the tradition of the church ?

A. Could I be sure that any thing, not contained in the Scriptures came down by a certain uninterrupted tradition, from the apostles, I should not except against it : nay, I do therefore receive the Holy Scriptures as the rule of my faith because they have such a tradition to warrant me so to do. But because there is no such tradition for any thing besides, therefore neither do I build my faith upon it : but, on the contrary, do suppose, that, by the providence of God, the Holy Scriptures were purposely written, to prevent those doubts, those forgeries, and deceits, which His infinite wisdom foresaw, an oral tradition would always have been liable unto.

Q. Can the Holy Scriptures alone make your faith perfect ?

A. They can : nor ought I to believe any thing as an article of my faith, which is not to be found in them, or cannot plainly be proved by them.

The Principles of the Christian Religion explained, in a brief Commentary upon the Church Catechism. 8vo. London, 1700. p. 20.

CHARLES TILSTONE BEKE.

The Bible, from its character as the written Word of God, must necessarily hold a rank as infinitely superior to all human compositions, as is the Almighty and all-perfect Being from whom it has emanated, above the weak and peccable creatures for whose instruction and guidance it is vouchsafed. Its statements, therefore, are equally to be received as authoritative in all matters relating to the history of the world, as are its doctrines and precepts imperative of all questions of faith and morals. The truth of this proposition, however, will not be admitted by those who dispute the sacred character of the Inspired Volume, and who in many cases have become so entirely blind to truth as to regard the Bible (or at least the early portions of it) as little better than a collection of traditions and mere fables, possessing few if any higher claims to belief than the mythological legends of Greece or of India.

In answer to these unbelievers, I need only say, that it is not within the scope of the present work to adduce arguments (if arguments be necessary) in support of the authenticity of the Bible as an inspired composition, for which I must refer to the works of the various advocates of Revelation; but with respect to its authority as an historical work I claim for it, from those who admit the evidence of

profane historians, that rank to which it is entitled in its character of the authentic records of the Israelitish nation. How far more important, simply in this character, is the Bible, in the consideration of the primeval history of mankind, than any heathen authorities whatever, will be at once acknowledged when its far higher antiquity is for a moment impartially regarded ; for it is a fact which cannot be too strongly borne in mind, that authentic profane history terminates at the point at which, in the ascent into past ages, the Canon of the Hebrew Scriptures only begins : Herodotus, the so-styled “Father of History” having been the contemporary of no earlier of the writers of the Bible, than Nehemiah, the last of the historians, and Malachi, the last of the prophets ; whilst the earlier prophets and historians carry upwards an unbroken chain of evidence into the remotest ages of antiquity. In fact with regard to the history of the world during the ages anterior to the Flood, and during also more than *one half* of the period which has elapsed since that epoch, every document possessed of any real claim to authority as historical evidence is contained in the Hebrew Scriptures, and in them alone.

Seeing then the vast importance of the Bible when regarded merely in its historical character, it is astonishing how, in the consideration of primeval history, the vague and unsatisfactory traditions of the Gentile world should be per-

mitted to stand upon an equality with the explicit and authoritative statements of the Bible ; and this, too, not merely by the opponents of Revelation, but by those persons also who implicitly receive the Scriptures as their absolute and exclusive guide in all matters of doctrine, of piety, and of moral conduct. Nor is this inconsistency the sole error committed even by the firmest and most sincere believers in the truths of Revelation ; for by attributing to their heathen guides far greater importance than they are under any circumstances entitled to, they have permitted those guides to bias and controul their judgement in the investigation and interpretation also of the Sacred Volume ; and, in fact, they have in many cases been led virtually (though indirectly, and, I need scarcely say, altogether without intention) to impugn that revered authority.

Origines Biblicæ, or Researches in Primeval History. 8vo. Lond. 1834, vol. 1, p. 1.

ANTHONY BLACKWALL.

A Critical and Theological Writer, was born in Derbyshire, 1674—died 1763.

The Old Testament is the rich treasury of all the sublimity of thought, moving tenderness of passion, and vigorous strength of expression, which are to be found in all the languages by which mortals declare their minds.

The Hebrew is an original and essential

language ; that borrows of none, but lends to all. Some of the sharpest pagan writers, inveterate enemies to the religion and learning of both Jews and Christians, have allowed the Hebrew tongue to have a noble emphasis, and a close and a beautiful brevity. The metaphors in that admirable book are apposite and lively, they illustrate the truths expressed by them, and raise the admiration of the reader. The names of men, animals, &c., are very significant. One word is often a good description, and gives you a satisfactory account of the chief and distinguishing property or quality of the thing or person named.

It would be no difficult matter for a man of diligence and good taste, competently skilled in the Hebrew and classical learning, to prove that the Hebrew Bible has every beauty and excellence that can be found in all the Greek and Roman authors ; and a great many more and stronger than any in all the most admired Classics.

Sacred Classics Defended.

2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1727, p. 9.

REV. THOMAS BANKES.

Of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford ; Vicar of Dixton, Monmouthshire ; Assistant Preacher at St. George's, Middlesex, and Afternoon Preacher at Sir George Wheeler's Chapel, Spital-square.

There is not a son of Adam, whatever his condition may be, whether in prosperity or ad-

versity, in temptation or deliverance, in health or sickness, but he may find in this book some balmy comfort, to the quieting of his conscience, and to the advancement of his salvation. In short, the Holy Bible, is the great light to our paths; our comfort in affliction, our shield and sword against Satan, the school of wisdom, the testimony of God's favour, and the food and nourishment of our souls.

The Christian's New and Complete Family Bible, folio. Address to the Reader.

HUGO GROTIUS.

A most distinguished Literary and Political Character, born at Delft, 1583—died 1645.

OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

We say then, that the writings, about which there is no dispute amongst Christians, and which have any particular person's name affixed to them, are that author's whose title they are mark'd with; because the first writers, such as Justin, Irenæus, Clemens, and others after them, quote these books under those names: and besides, Tertullian says that in his time some of the original copies of those books were extant. Neither did any Heathens or Jews raise any controversy, as if they were not the works of those whose they were said to be. And Julian openly confesses, that those were Peter's,

Paul's, Matthew's, Mark's, and Luke's, which were read by the Christians under those names. No body in his senses makes any doubt of Homer's or Virgil's works being theirs, by reason of the constant testimony of the Greeks concerning the one, and of the Latins concerning the other ; how much more then ought we to stand by the testimony of almost all the nations in the world, for the authors of these books ?

Truth of the Christian Religion, translated by J. Clarke, 8vo. 1743, p. 143.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

But since God has been pleased to leave us the records of the Jewish religion, which was true of old, and affords no small testimony to the Christian religion ; it is not foreign to our purpose, to see upon what foundation the credibility of these is built. That these books are theirs to whom they are ascribed, appears in the same manner as we have proved of our books, and they whose names they bear, were either prophets, or men worthy to be credited ; such as Esdras, who is supposed to have collected them into one volume, at that time when the prophets Haggai, Malachi, and Zacharias were yet alive. I will not here repeat what was said before, in commendation of Moses. And not only that first part delivered by Moses, as we have shewn in

the first book, but the later history is confirmed by many Pagans. Thus the Phœnician Annals mention the names of David and Solomon, and the league they made with the Tyrians. And Berosus, as well as the Hebrew books mention, Nabuchadonoser, and other Chaldeans. Vaphres, the king of Egypt in Jeremiah is the same with Apries in Herodotus. And the Greek books are filled with Cyrus and his successors down to Darius; and Josephus in his book against Appion, quotes many other things relating to the Jewish nation: to which may be added that what we above took out of Strabo and Trogus. But there is no reason for us Christians to doubt of the credibility of these books, because there are testimonies in our books, out of almost every one of them, the same as they are found in the Hebrew. Nor did Christ, when he reproved many things in the teachers of the law, and in the Pharisees of his time, ever accuse them of falsifying the books of Moses and the Prophets, or of using supposititious or altered books. And it can never be proved or made credible, that after Christ's time the Scripture should be corrupted in any thing of moment, if we do but consider how far and wide the Jewish nation, who every where kept those books, was dispersed over the whole world. For first the ten Tribes were carried into Media by the Assyrians, and afterwards the other two, and many of these fixed themselves in foreign countries, after they had a

permission from Cyrus to return; the Macedonians invited them into Alexandria with great advantages; the cruelty of Antiochus, the civil war of the Asmonæi, and the foreign wars of Pompey and Sossius, scattered a great many; the country of Cyrene was filled with Jews; the cities of Asia, Macedonia, Lycaonia, and the isles of Cyprus, and Crete, and others were full of them; and that there was a vast number of them in Rome we learn from Horace, Juvenal, and Martial. It is impossible that such distant bodies of men should be imposed upon by any art whatsoever, or that they should agree in a falsity. We may add further that almost three hundred years before Christ, by the care of the Egyptian kings, the Hebrew books were translated into Greek, by those who are called the Seventy; that the Greeks might have them in another language, but the sense the same in the main; upon which account they were the less liable to be altered. And the same books were translated into Chaldee, and into the Jerusalem language; that is, half Syriac; partly a little before, and partly a little after Christ's time. After which followed other Greek versions, that of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotian, which Origen, and others after him, compared with the seventy Interpreters, and found no difference in the history, or in any weighty matters. Philo flourished in Caligula's time, and Josephus lived till Vespasian's. Each of them quote out of the

Hebrew books the same things that we find at this day. By this time the Christian religion began to be more and more spread, and many of its professors were Hebrews : many had studied the Hebrew learning, who could very easily have perceived and discovered it, if the Jews had received any thing that was false, in any remarkable subject, I mean, by comparing it with more ancient books. But they not only do this, but they bring very many testimonies out of the Old Testament, plainly in that sense in which they are received amongst the Hebrews ; which Hebrews may be convicted of any crime, sooner than (I will not say of falsity, but) of negligence, in relation to these books ; because they used to transcribe and compare them so very scrupulously that they could tell how often every letter came over. We may add, in the first place, an argument, and that no mean one, why the Jews did not alter the Scripture designedly ; because the Christians prove, and as they think very strongly that their Master Jesus was that very Messiah who was of old promised to the forefathers of the Jews ; and this from those very books, which were read by the Jews. Which the Jews would have taken the greatest care should never have been, after there arose a controversy between them and the Christians ; if it had ever been in their power to have altered what they would.

Idem, p. 164, *et seq.*

R. D. HAMPDEN, D.D.

Regius Professor of Divinity.

Let me then at once state that I purpose leading my hearers to the Scriptures themselves as the sole supreme authority of all revealed truth. When I see in the Bible itself how exclusively it reserves to itself the right of declaring the truth of God—when I find it asserting its own sufficiency and certainty in making us “wise unto salvation”—when I observe our Lord himself citing the Scriptures of the Old Testament as decisive authorities,—his Apostles also appealing to them,—the primitive converts commended for their zeal in searching the Scriptures,—our Lord again characterising them as “testifying of” him,—St. Paul approving Timothy for having known the Scriptures from a child ;—looking to these facts, and to the practice also of the early Church in all its controversies of deciding by the testimony of the Written Word,—I cannot admit any other authority as approaching at all to the weight and sanctity of the evidence of Scripture. I should feel myself untrue to the great principle of Protestantism, which broke the seals of the Bible and opened wide its pages to the reading of every Christian man—I should feel myself also untrue to the teaching of the Church of England, which so strongly declares that “Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read

therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation ;” and again that “ although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet as it ought not to decree anything against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation ”—if, I say, with these strong assertions of the paramount authority of the Bible, I should receive any other authority as a legitimate source of divine truth, I should convict myself of deserting the cause of Protestantism and of our own Church, no less than the cause of the Bible itself.

Inaugural Lecture, March 17, 1836.

JOHN LELAND, D.D.

An eminent Writer in Defence of Christianity, born at Wigan in Lancashire, 1691—died 1766.

I can sincerely profess that the reason of my undertaking this work is because I am firmly persuaded that the cause of Christianity is the cause of God, of religious truth and virtue : that to assert the authority of the Scriptures is one of the best services that can be done to mankind, and even to the interests of natural religion, the main principles of which are there most clearly explained, most strongly established, and most powerfully enforced : that if the Christian revelation were once discarded, the strongest

restraints to vice and wickedness would be removed, and the most effectual motives to the practice of virtue and the purest morals, together with their glorious and divine hopes, which are the chief support and joy of a good man's life, would be subverted, or in a great way weakened : that to take away the Scriptures out of the hands of the people would be to give them up to all manner of wickedness, ignorance, superstition, and false worship, and to leave them exposed to be practised upon by artful and designing men, against all which a thorough acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and a firm adherence to them as the great rule of faith and practice, is the most effectual preservative.

I can scarce form to myself an idea of a revelation whose doctrines and precepts have a more manifest tendency to promote the honour of God and the good of mankind, or that is more remote from the views of worldly ambition, avarice, and sensuality ; in a word, that carries in it greater internal character of goodness and purity, or is attended with more illustrious external attestations of a divine original.

The Divine Authority of the Old and New Testament asserted, 8vo. London.—Preface.

ANONYMOUS.

There is a way of reading the Scriptures, which is now particularly and pathetically to be demanded for the reading the Psalter. And

that is, the Porismatic way; or, to read with an holy care, to observe and educe, the doctrines of godliness, which this rich storehouse of truth will yield unto them that are seeking after it. Reader, make a pause upon every verse, and see what lessons of piety are to be learnt from every clause. Turn the lessons into prayers; and send the prayers up unto the heavens; as arrows from the hand of a mighty man, send them with lively ejaculations up unto the heavens. The singer gives himself time to do the part of such a reader; and, oh, what a melody does he make unto the Lord! They who have tried this way of reading with a note and a wish devoutly formed upon every verse, have seen cause to bless a glorious God for instructing them in this method of communion with him, and rejoyce in this way of conversing with his testimonies, more than if all riches had been bestowed upon them.

Psalms in a translation exactly conformed unto the originall; but all in blank verse, &c. 12mo. Boston, N. E. 1718.

SAMUEL SEYER, M.A.

Master of the Free Grammar School, Bristol, and Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford.

Now the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament claim to themselves the title of the Word of God. It is of the utmost consequence that we be convinced, that this claim is sup-

ported by truth, otherwise we shall not treat them as we ought. If they are what they claim to be, they demand our most attentive and reverential regard. And we shall gain conviction herein, if we employ our reason, where it may innocently and usefully, and ought to be employed, in considering the following particulars :—

That they were written or dictated by men inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, who gave incontestable proofs to those they lived with, that they were inspired, by undoubted miracles which they performed : and have proved themselves such to us by the exact fulfilling of prophecies which they uttered.

That in particular the transactions recorded by Moses were testified by a ritual of services and ceremonies founded upon these transactions ; which ritual was scrupulously observed, first by those who were eye-witnesses of these transactions, and religiously adhered to by their posterity for ages : nay, which are now testified in a great degree by the present Jews ; who, though dispersed in great numbers thro' every nation under heaven, yet remain a distinct people unconnected with, and separate from all ; as a standing miracle to prove the truth of those writings which foretel this their wonderful dispersion among and distinction from all other nations, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And the facts relating to Jesus

Christ were so well known and attested, that numbers were thereby converted to Christianity, who transmitted the truth of these facts to their posterity ; to which facts the establishment and discipline of the Christian church, in every successive generation, have given a constant and unsuspected testimony.

That the several writings of Holy Scripture, though penned by different persons at distant periods of time, yet all go upon the same plan, all suppose the truth of and refer to the former Scriptures. Moses and later prophets, tho' at some thousand years distance of time, yet agree together and build upon the same foundation : and the writers of the New Testament refer to and suppose the truth of the facts recorded in the old ; their grand design being to shew, that the predictions concerning the Messiah, contained in the prophetical writings of the Old Testament, were fulfilled in the person and sufferings of Jesus ; and they take those predictions as the foundation of their reasoning on that subject. So that if the Bible be an imposture it must be carried on by a concurrence of persons, and in a manner so near to impossible that it is absurd to mention the supposition.

And that the tendency of Scripture in respect of its history, its precepts, and examples is so much adapted to promote true notions of God, so consonant to the divine glory, and so agree-

able to the nature and interests of man, that it is really impossible it should proceed from any other than Jehovah, our great God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

Essays on the important truths contained in the Holy Scriptures. 8vo. Lond. 1761. p. 68—70.

STEPHEN TEMPEST :

Of Bracewell, in Craven, Yorkshire. Whittaker, in his History of Craven, p. 88, says, the tract from which the following extract is taken, is “the very sensible tract of a very sensible country gentleman.”

I never saw God, I never heard his voice ; but I find his will made plain to me in the Scriptures, which contain such just and reasonable instructions, by which I may regulate my conduct, and such a perfect system of morality, as was never since equalled by our greatest and wisest theologists and philosophers : and these appear, even by their own evidence, to be inspired writings ; that is to say, the Word of God. Tho’ we have still a greater proof of this, for these sacred books have been handed down to us in so authentic a manner, that we can no more question their being the Word of God, than we can doubt that the *Æneis* was writ by Virgil, or if Julius Cæsar writ his own Commentaries.

And now I am convinced that there is a God, and that the Scriptures were inspired by him, it inevitably follows that, upon their testimony,

I must also believe in Jesus Christ. I must believe that he was born of the Virgin Mary; that he lived upon earth for our instruction and example, and that he died for our sins, and ascended into heaven for our redemption: and of this I have as strong a proof, as I have that William Duke of Normandy once conquered England and reigned over it; or of the death and passion of Julius Cæsar in the senate house at Rome; and I must, for the same reason, believe in all the mysteries of faith, which are revealed by the same authority.

Religio Laici, or a Layman's Thoughts upon his Duty to God, his neighbour, and himself. 8vo. London, 1764. p. 3.

LADY JANE GREY.

Daughter of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and Mary his wife, sister of Henry the Eighth; born at Broadgate, Leicestershire. A most learned, accomplished and pious young lady, married to Lord Guildford Dudley; was proclaimed Queen against her will, to suit the ambitious views of her father, and her husband's father, the Duke of Northumberland—beheaded February 12, 1554.

I have here sent you (my dear sister Katherine) a book, which altho' it be not outwardly trim'd with gold, or the curious embroidery of the artfullest needles, yet inwardly it is more worth than all the precious mines which the vast world can boast of. It is the Book, my only best, and best lov'd sister, of the law of the

Lord: it is the Testament and last will which he bequeathed unto us wretches and wretched sinners, which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy: and if you with a good mind read it, and with an earnest desire follow it, no doubt it shall bring you to an immortal and everlasting life. It will teach you to live and learn you to die: it will win you more, and endow you with greater felicity than you should have gained by our woful father's lands; for as if God had prospered him, you should have inherited his honours and manors; so if you apply diligently this Book, seeking to direct your life according to the rule of the same, you shall be an inheritor of such riches, as neither the covetous shall withdraw from you, neither the thief shall steal, neither the moth corrupt. Desire with David, my best sister, to understand the law of the Lord your God; live still to die, that you by death may purchase eternal life, and trust not that the tenderness of your age shall lengthen your life; for unto God, when he calleth, all hours, times and seasons are alike, and bless'd are they whose lamps are furnish'd when he cometh, for as soon will the Lord be glorified in the young as in the old.

An exhortation written the night before her execution, in the New Testament in Greek, which she sent to her sister, Lady Katherine Grey. Printed in the Phenix, and several other works.

THOMAS SCOTT.

The Scriptures.

Truth with her golden beam
Inscribes th' immortal line :
Goodness and equity, supreme,
Through the blest volume shine.

In elocution plain
These heavenly pages teach ;
And yet, their majesty of strain
What mortal pen can reach ?

Here precepts, old and new,
By God's own signet bind ;
With powerful wisdom these endue
The weak, but humble, mind.

Here promises are sown,
Which holy strength infuse,
Where dangers throng ; or sorrow's groan
Pleads for supporting views.

O laws ! whose vigour rends
The self-accusing breast :
Whose vigour to the upright sends
Sweet self-possession's rest.

O promises, whose force
Is from all change secure !
Long as their everlasting source,
Your blessings shall endure.

Hence warn'd, my sins I see ;
 Against my sins I guard :
 Hence aided, from perdition flee
 To heav'n's immense reward.

Ye rich men, roll in gold,
 Ye epicures, in wine :
 Your portion in contempt I hold ;
 Thy word, O God, be mine.

*Lyric Poems, Devotional and
 Moral.* 8vo. Lond. 1773, p. 33.

GEORGE HORNE.

The amiable and exemplary Bishop of Norwich ; born near Maidstone, Kent, 1730—died 1792.

When we study the writings of *men*, it is well if after much pains and labour we find some few particles of truth amongst a great deal of error. When we read the Scriptures, all we meet with is truth. In the former case, we are like the Africans on the dust coast, of whom it is said, they dig pits nigh the water-falls of mountains abounding with gold, and then, with incredible pains and industry, wash off the sand, till they espy at the bottom two or three shining grains of the metal, that pays them only as labourers. In the latter case, we work in a mine sufficient to enrich ourselves and all about us.

Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Bishop Horne, by W. Jones. 8vo. London, p. 249.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Respecting the figurative language of the Scriptures, there is this curious and important question to be determined, Whether God adopted it, because it was the style of the eastern nations; or it became the style of the eastern nations, because God originally constituted and employed it?

Idem, p. 334.

FRANCIS WAYLAND, D.D.

President of Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, and
Professor of Moral Philosophy.

MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL EFFICACY OF THE SACRED
SCRIPTURES.

As to the powerful, I had almost said miraculous, effect of the Sacred Scriptures, there can no longer be a doubt in the mind of any one on whom fact can make an impression. That the truths of the Bible have the power of awakening an intense moral feeling in man under every variety of character, learned or ignorant, civilized or savage, that they make bad men good, and send a pulse of healthful feeling through all the domestic, civil, and social relations, that they teach men to love right, to hate wrong, and to seek each other's welfare, as the children of one common parent, that they control the baneful passions of the human heart, and thus make

men proficient in the science of self-government ; and, finally, that they teach him to aspire after a conformity to a Being of infinite holiness, and fill him with hopes infinitely more purifying, more exalting, more suited to his nature, than any other, which this world has ever known ; are facts incontrovertible as the laws of philosophy or the demonstrations of mathematics. Evidence in support of all this can be brought from every age, in the history of man, since there has been a revelation from God on earth. We see the proof of it every where around us. There is scarcely a neighbourhood in our country, where the Bible is circulated, in which we cannot point you to a very considerable portion of its population, whom its truths have reclaimed from the practice of vice, and taught the practice of whatsoever things are pure, and honest, and just, and of good report.

That this distinctive and peculiar effect is produced upon every man to whom the Gospel is announced, we pretend not to affirm. But we do affirm, that, besides producing this special renovation, to which we have alluded, upon a part, it, in a most remarkable degree, elevates the tone of moral feeling throughout the whole community. Wherever the Bible is freely circulated, and its doctrines carried home to the understandings of men, the aspect of society is altered, the frequency of crime is diminished, men begin to love justice, and to administer it

by law, and a virtuous public opinion, that strongest safeguard of right, spreads over a nation the shield of its invisible protection. Wherever it has faithfully been brought to bear upon the human heart, even under most unpromising circumstances, it has, within a single generation revolutionized the whole structure of society, and thus within a few years, done more for man than all other means have for ages accomplished without it. For proof of all this, I need only refer you to the effects of the Gospel in Greenland, or in South Africa, in the Society Islands, or even among the aborigines of our own country.

But, before we leave this part of the subject, it may be well to pause for a moment, and inquire whether, in addition to its moral efficacy, the Bible may not exert a powerful influence upon the intellectual character of man. And here it is scarcely necessary that I should remark, that, of all the books with which, since the invention of writing, this world has been deluged, the number of those is very small which have produced any perceptible effect on the mass of human character. By far the greater part have been, even by their contemporaries, unnoticed and unknown. Not many a one has made its little mark upon the generation that produced it, though it sunk with that generation to utter forgetfulness. But, after the ceaseless toil of six thousand years, how few have been the works,

the adamantine basis of whose reputation has stood unhurt amid the fluctuations of time, and whose impression can be traced through successive centuries, on the history of our species.

When, however, such a work appears, its effects are absolutely incalculable, and such a work, you are aware, is the *Iliad* of Homer. Who can estimate the results produced by the incomparable efforts of a single mind? Who can tell what Greece owes to this first born of song? Her breathing marbles, her solemn temples, her unrivalled eloquence, and her matchless verse, all points us to that transcendent genius, who, by the very splendour of his own effulgence, woke the human intellect from the slumber of ages. It was Homer who gave laws to the artist, it was Homer who inspired the poet, it was Homer who thundered in the Senate, and, more than all, it was Homer who was sung by the people, and hence a nation was cast into the mould of one mighty mind, and the land of the *Iliad* became the region of taste, the birth-place of the arts.

Nor was this influence confined within the limits of Greece. Long after the sceptre of empire had passed westward, Genius still held her court on the banks of the *Ilyssus*, and from the country of Homer gave laws to the world. The light, which the blind old man of Scio had kindled in Greece, shed its radiance over Italy, and thus did he awaken a second nation into

intellectual existence. And we may form some idea of the power which this one work has to the present day exerted over the mind of man, by remarking, that nation after nation, and century after century, has been able to do little more than transpose his incidents, new name his characters, and paraphrase his sentiments.

But, considered simply as an intellectual production, who will compare the poems of Homer with the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament?

Where in the Iliad shall we find simplicity and pathos, which shall vie with the narrative of Moses, or maxims of conduct to equal in wisdom the Proverbs of Solomon, or sublimity which does not fade away before the conceptions of Job or David, of Isaiah or St. John? But I cannot pursue this comparison, I feel that it is doing wrong to the mind which dictated the Iliad, and to those other mighty intellects on which the light of the holy oracles never shined. Who that has read his poem has not observed how he strove in vain to give dignity to the mythology of his time? Who has not seen how the religion of his country, unable to support the flight of his imagination, sunk powerless beneath him. It is the unseen world, where the master spirits of our race breathe freely, and are at home, and it is mournful to behold the intellect of Homer striving to free itself from the conceptions of materialism, and then sinking

down in hopeless despair, to weave idle tales about Jupiter and Juno, Apollo and Diana. But the difficulties under which he laboured are abundantly illustrated by the fact, that the light which he poured upon the human intellect, taught other ages how unworthy was the religion of his day of the man who was compelled to use it. "It seems to me," says Longinus, "that Homer, when he describes dissensions, jealousies, tears, imprisonments, and other afflictions to his deities, hath as much as was in his power, made the men of the Iliad gods, and the gods men. To man, when afflicted, death is the termination of evils, but he hath made not only the nature but the miseries, of the gods eternal."

If, then, so great results have flowed from this one effort of a single mind, what may we not expect from the combined efforts of several, at least his equals in power over the human heart? If that one genius, though groping in the thick darkness of absurd idolatry, wrought so glorious a transformation in the character of his countrymen, what may we not look for from the universal dissemination of those writings, on whose authors was poured the full splendour of eternal truth. If unassisted human nature, spell-bound by a childish mythology, have done so much, what may we not hope for from the supernatural efforts of pre-eminent genius, which spake as it was moved by the Holy Ghost?

American Commonplace-book of Prose.
12mo. Boston, 1828, p. 26, *et seq.*

EDWARD VAUGHAN.

Preacher of God's holie word at St. Mary Wolnoth, London.

And thus they bring some to neglect the studie of the Sacred Bible: some to doubt of the trueth and dignitie thereof, and some to hate or to despise the professors of the same. If these *calumniators* and busie bodies were as readie to put in practise their preaching, as they be to followe after a fault in their living, there should be no such neede of *prisons* for malefactors, of *bridewells* for libellors, nor of *hatchets* for traitors.

Another sort there is (in their kinde worse than all these) who by their learning doe disswade the vnlearned from that study and order of reading the Bible which is prescribed priuatlie and publiquelie by a man whose life is vnrebukeable, whose learning counteruaileth the best learned: whose good will to all men hath been published in his preaching freelie, whose vnderserued and vnanswerable paynes hath beene set foorth by printing, and whose godlie zeale and care doth plainelie appeare in those whom he hath taught in the knowledge of Gods most holie word, who are indeed as testimonies of his trueth and infalliable arguments to proue the experience of his *method* and order of teaching, (which many ignorant men doo controule secretly) to be principall. And what should I say

more, I doubt not of mildenesse of constancie, and of the vertue of Gods holy Spirit in him, so as he may liue bouldlie euen at the faces of his aduersaries, still prospering in Gods busines, and verie well in his owne. In the meane time he is honored among them that bee honored, that fortune abateth without fault, and hee is ashamed among them that bee ashamed, that fortune enhaunceth without merit; honorable honor resteth not in the dignitie that men haue, but in the good workes whereby they deserve.

Herein I commend not the best, the worst *are not tollerable*. There is no more comparison betwixt the arke and the *tabernacle*, than is betweene *Gods word and worldly welth*: the getting, the keeping and the spending of the one is sin, and the seeking of the other is not finding: without the diligent reading of the Old and New Testament. *Rethorick* is good, I graunt you, *to perswade*: *Astronomie* is fit to know the course of the starres. *Geometrie* is profitable to measure the land. *Musick* is necessarie to recreate: *Philosophie* to take away the terror of death. These and the rest, be they neuer so good, so *fit*, so profitable, and so necessarie: yet they are all but as dimme starres, in respect of Diuinitie. The *Phrigian* harmonie mooued to the calendes, maketh a great noyse: but being mooued to *Apollo*, is still calme and quiet. *Hiarchion* hearing *Ruphinus* blowe on his pipe,

would neuer after play on his flute, the *thrush* although hauing manie good notes, will not sing in the companie of the *nightingall*. Euen so, let all the world hold their peace, sit downe and heare Diuinitie. It is like the *piller of fire* by night, and a *cloudie piller* by day: to conduct the children of *Abraham* through the wast wilderness of this world, to that spirituall and euerlasting kingdome of Canaan: from this miserable *Mesopotamia*, and out of the bondage of sinfull flesh, to a *gall* anoynting the eies of the faithfull, that they may see and auoide that foule spirite *Asmodeus*. To a starre, leading all wise men to the true worship of Jesus Christ: and it is a law to controle vs, a sheelde to defend vs, and a light to teach vs.

Seing then it hath so manie good vses, how can we be without the knowledge thereof?

Seing our iourney and voyage is so dangerous, and we such vnskillfull traualiers: how shall we misse so good a guid?

Seing wee are all ouerwhelmed with a cloud of darkenesse and ignorance: how can *we want* such a skilfull schoolemaster?

And seeing we haue all sorts of enemies hindering vs, and we our selues so vnfurnished, how shall wee bee able to stand, not hauing on the whole armor of God? How shall we quench the fierie darts of the *diuel*? and what shall I say more? O that my mouth could cause my words to mount ouer all the world, for to make such a

deepe impression in the hearts of all *men*; that neither things absent, present *or to come* in the losse of libertie, living, or life should make them to start one iot from the Christian delight, the holie and heauenlie exercise of Gods word.

Many, no doubt, would more willinglie giue themselves to this godlie labor, seemed not the Bible so great and tedious.

And manie might soone bee brought to the knowledge thereof, if their Minister had either will or abilitie to deuide unto them the word of God aright.

A Method or Brief Instruction; very profitable and speedy, for the reading and understanding the Old and New Testament. 12mo. London, 1590.

HUGH PETERS.

A Preacher in the time of Charles the First and Cromwell;
executed after the Restoration as a Regicide.

He that sets up religion, to get any thing by it more than the glory of God, and the saving his own soul, will make a bad bargain of it in the close. My dear only child, be rooted in the truth, and thou shalt be fruitfull, and thriving.

Be constant in reading the Scriptures, and that with a fervent meditation, I mean, as to pray in praying, fast in fasting, so to read in reading. Many doubtless take up a cursory trade, to reade out the cries of a defiled or rackt conscience: I say read with delight, not as under a load, or as a labourer, who waits for

the shadow of the evening, which you shall never do, unless your heart be connatural with the Word; and therefore remember as justification takes away guilt, and punishment; sanctification takes away the power and filth; glorification takes away the presence of sin: so effectual calling takes away that jarre that is betwixt the soul and the law of God, by reason of sin; the called of God read but their father's blessed will in his word, his testament, his legacies, his precepts, his threatenings against sin, &c., all which his childe delights to hear and read. This one book, well read will answer any question, or case, and you'll finde Solomon's Proverbs the best politicks, and Christ crucified the best divinity. But in reading the Scriptures let me reach out this experience; when you have prayed over your purpose that way, then in every chapter, first mind the method, then note the hard things you understand not, and get helps to clear them to you. And, lastly, gather out the chief doctrines or lessons, then in reading one chapter, you may understand many: and, if you read the Bible with the annotations of some divines, or the Dutch translation, it will not be amiss.

*A Dying Father's last Legacy
to an only Child. 12mo. 1660.*

THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE, B.D.

RECAPITULATION : — MORAL QUALIFICATION FOR THE
STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

I. Such are the principal proofs for the genuineness, authenticity, credibility, and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures ; and, taking the whole together, every candid inquirer must be convinced, that we have every possible evidence for their truth and divinity which can be reasonably expected or desired. How absolutely NECESSARY a revelation was, in order to make known to mankind the proper object of their worship, and to communicate to them a just rule of life, is manifest from the deplorable state of religion and morals in the Heathen world, both ancient and modern.

II. The manner in which the Sacred Scriptures have been transmitted to us, their language and style, together with the minute circumstantiality of the facts and doctrines recorded in them, added to the moral impossibility of imposing forged writings upon mankind, are all indisputable proofs of their GENUINENESS and AUTHENTICITY.

III. Equally satisfactory is the evidence for the CREDULITY of the writers. For they had a perfect knowledge of the subjects which they have related, and their moral character was never impeached by their keenest opponents ;

their accounts were published among the people who witnessed the events which they have recorded, and who could easily have detected falsehood if any such there had been, but who did not attempt to question either the reality of those facts or the fidelity of the narrators; there is an entire harmony between the sacred writers and profane history, both natural and civil, and the reality of the principal facts related in the Bible, is perpetuated and commemorated by monuments that subsist to this day, in every country where either Jews or Christians are to be found.

IV. And that the Scriptures are not merely entitled to be received as credible, but also as containing the revealed will of God—in other words, that they are divinely inspired—we have evidence of various kinds amounting to moral demonstration: for, on the other hand, their sacred origin is evinced by the most external attestations, *viz.*, miracles and prophecy, which carry with them the most manifest proofs of a divine interposition; and which it cannot reasonably be supposed that God would ever give, or permit to be given, to an imposture; and, on the other hand, the Scriptures have the most excellent internal character of truth and goodness, in the sublimity, excellence and sanctity of the system of doctrine and morals which they announce—in the harmony and connexion that subsists between all the parts of which they

consist, in the preservation of the Sacred Scriptures, and in their admirable tendency (which is shewn by its effects wherever the Scriptures are cordially and sincerely believed) to promote the glory of God and the good of mankind, and the cause of virtue and righteousness in the world, and to prepare men, by a life of faith and holy obedience upon earth, for the eternal enjoyment of God in heaven: together with the peculiar advantages possessed by the Christian religion over all other religions.

On all these accounts the Holy Scriptures are thankfully to be received and embraced as the Word of God, and as the rule of Christian faith and practice. “And till I see the evidence of them disproved, or the religion of Christ demonstrated to be irrational and absurd, I am determined by the grace of God, to hold fast my profession to the end, seeking after the kingdom of glory by the practice of that righteousness which prepares for and leads to it, in a firm dependance upon that comfortable declaration of Jesus Christ, ‘That God so loved the world, that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ ”

Since the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, it becomes the indispensable duty of all carefully to peruse these sacred oracles, that through them we may become “perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Tim. iii. 17.) This, indeed, is

not only agreeable to the divine command, "Search the Scriptures," (John v. 39,) and to the design of the Sacred Writings, but is further commended by the practice of the church in every age, and by the divine promise to all true believers, that "they shall be taught of God." (Isa. liv. 13.) The circumstances of every individual must regulate the portion of time that ought daily to be devoted to this important study; which should be undertaken with devout simplicity and humility, and prosecuted with diligence and attention, with a willingness to resort to all necessary helps for advancement in the truth, and for security against error. To these qualifications, especially, should be added prayer for divine aid and teaching, together with a sincere desire to know and perform the will of God, and, laying aside all prejudice, to follow the Scriptures wherever conviction may lead our minds; for it is indubitable that persons of piety, who are anxiously desirous of the knowledge of divine truth, are aided by the Spirit of God, in searching out the meaning of Scripture, particularly in such subjects as have a special reference to faith and religious practice.

Compendious Introduction to the Study of the Bible.

THE REV. THOMAS HARMER.

A learned Dissenter; was born at Norwich, 1715—died 1788.

The perusing of travels is to most people a very delightful kind of reading; but as gentlemen that publish accounts of this kind to the world, seldom think of illustrating the Scriptures; as those that have made observations of this nature, content themselves with proposing a very few, as large collections of these writers are very expensive; and, after all, numbers of useful things will be found to be passed over in silence by them all; and as most readers will not exercise patience enough to make these discoveries in their reading authors of this sort; I have been led to imagine that the publishing of some observations of this kind, and especially if formed into a regular series, could not well fail of being acceptable to the public, if executed in any tolerable manner. How far these papers answer such an idea, I must leave to my candid and good-natured reader to determine. I have at least endeavoured to obey the precept which a gentleman in elder life, to whose instructions I paid great deference, gave me at my first setting out in a course of studies. Make every kind of study pay its contribution to the oracles of God.

Observations on divers passages of Scripture, placing them in a light altogether new. 2 vols. 8vo. London. Preface.

REV. HENRY VENN.

Lecturer of St. Albans, Vicar of Huddersfield, Rector of Yelling, Huntingdonshire, a pious divine; was born in the County of Surrey, 1725—died 1796.

THE STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

As the Scripture was given by inspiration of God, and its great design is to instruct men in the knowledge of him, so it contains repeated commands to search into and meditate upon its sacred contents. “These words,” says God, “which I command thee, shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt bind them as a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes; and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.” Deut. vi. 8, 9; that is, thou shalt most familiarly converse with them, and most carefully treasure them up in thy mind. St. Paul, speaking of the Old Testament, tells us, that “whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning and for our admonition.” Of the New Testament we are told, that it was written “that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, we might have life through his name.” John xx. 31. St. Peter instructs us, that he wrote both his epistles to “stir up the pure minds of Christians by way of remembrance, and to put them in mind of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of

the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2. Now as these are the ends for which the Scriptures were inspired of God, and directed to us, so do they lay an obligation upon all into whose hands they are put to acquaint themselves with them. And not to read what God has written and directed to us, is in fact a profane contempt both of his authority and mercy; it looks as if we thought *him* such an insignificant being, or ourselves so little to need his information, that it is not worth our while to peruse with care and frequency the contents of those sacred books, which by his inspired penmen he hath vouchsafed to send us.

The Complete Duty of Man. 8vo. London, 1824. p. 279.

REV. ALEXANDER GEDDES, LL.D.

A very learned Roman Catholic divine; was born in the county of Banff in Scotland, 1737—died 1802.

The Pentateuch, or, as they are commonly called, the Five Books of Moses, are not only the foremost in rank, but also the first in importance, of all the Hebrew scriptures. They are the great repository of the most remote antiquities, religion, polity and literature of the Jewish nation; to which, in all their posteriour writers, there is a constant reference or allusion. To them the righteous judge, the reforming prince, the admonishing priest, the menacing

prophet, perpetually and uniformly appealed; on them the historiographer, the orator, the poet, and the philosopher, endeavoured to form their respective styles; and to rival the language of the Pentateuch was, even in the most felicitous periods of their state, considered as the highest effort of Hebrew genius.

Nor is this, indeed, a subject of wonder; for the idea of divine inspiration being here left out of the question, these books must, by competent judges, be allowed to be an admirable composition. I know not if it would be too much to affirm, that, whether they be considered as a compend of history, or as a digest of laws, or as a system of theology, or as models of good writing, they are in some respects unequalled, in none over-matched, by the best production of ancient times. Let the Chaldean or Grecian cosmogonies be compared with the first chapter of Genesis; the best narratives of Herodotus or Livy with the whole story of Joseph; the most laboured harangue of Thucydides or Salust with the simple tale of Abraham's servant, or the pathetic and winning speech of Judah; the most sublime ode of Pindar with either of the songs of Moses; the twelve tables with the decalogue; and the republics of Plato or Tully with the whole Mosaical jurisprudence; I will venture to say, that, if the taste of the comparer have not been previously vitiated by modern meretricious refinements, he will be induced to

give to the former, either a decided preference, or an equal praise. To dwell on this topic, and more minutely to consider the character of the author, as an historian, orator, poet, legislator, and divine, would be a pleasing task ; but would, instead of a short preface, demand an entire volume.

The Holy Bible, faithfully translated, with explanatory Notes. 3 vols. 4to. Lond. 1792. Preface.

The gospel of JESUS is my religious code ; his doctrines are my dearest delight. “ His yoke (to me) is easy, and his burden is light.” But this yoke I would not put on ; these doctrines I could not admire ; that Gospel I would not make my law, if Reason, pure Reason, were not my prompter and preceptress. I willingly profess myself a sincere though unworthy disciple of Christ. *Christian* is my name, and *Catholic* my surname, Rather than renounce these glorious titles, I would shed my blood : but I would not shed a drop of it for what is neither Catholic nor Christian. Catholic Christianity I revere wherever I find it, and in whatsoever sect it dwells : but I cannot revere the loads of hay and stubble which have been blended with its precious gems ; and which still, in every sect with which I am acquainted, more or less tarnish to hide their lustre. I cannot revere metaphysical, unintelligible creeds, nor blasphemous confessions of faith. I cannot revere perse-

cution for the sake of conscience, nor tribunals that enforce orthodoxy by fire and faggot. I cannot revere formulas of faith made the test of loyalty, nor penal laws made the hedge of church establishments. In short, I cannot revere any system of religion, that, for divine doctrines, teacheth the dictates of men; and by the base intermixture of “human traditions maketh the commandments of God of none effect.” This I say, even of Christian systems; and shall I grant to systematic Judaism what I deny to systematic Christianity? Shall I disbelieve the pretended miracles, the spurious deeds, the forged charters, the lying legends of one, and give full credit to those of the other?

*Critical Remarks on the Hebrew Scriptures
corresponding with a New Translation of the
Bible. 4to. Lond. 1800. To the Reader.*

ROBERT GRAY, D. D.

Prebendary of Durham and of Chichester, and Rector of
Bishop Wearmouth.

The most striking illustration, however, of the importance of heathen literature, arises from its connexion with that of the Sacred Writings, from the evidence which it affords in confirmation of the doctrines, institutions, and facts founded upon Christianity is founded, or to which its records indirectly relate. Indeed it may not unreasonably be presumed, that the writings of

pagan antiquity have been providentially preserved with peculiar regard to this object, since, notwithstanding numerous productions of past ages have perished, sufficient remains are still possessed, to unite the cause of heathen literature with that of religion, and to render the one subservient to the interests of the other.

Accordingly, the heathen writings substantiate, by an independent and collateral report, the occurrence of many of the events, and the accomplishment of many of the prophecies recorded by the inspired writers; they establish the accuracy of many incidental circumstances, which are interspersed throughout the Scriptures, and above all, by the gradually perverted representations which they give of revealed doctrines and institutions, they attest the actual communication of such truth from time to time, and pay the tribute of experience to the wisdom and necessity of a written revelation.

On the other hand it must be admitted, that in proportion as the heathen writings are found to communicate these testimonies to the cause of religion, they receive an increased value, since whatever lustre they throw upon it, is reflected back upon them, and tends to raise them in our esteem.

But if the literature of the heathens presents much which strengthens the evidence of revealed religion, that of the Jews affords still more abundant confirmation of the authority of its insti-

tutions, and of the fidelity of its records, without entering into the wide field of Rabbinical learning, (of which the earlier productions, amidst vain traditions, authenticate and illustrate the fundamental doctrines of Scripture), and confining ourselves to the works of Philo and Josephus, we find that these eminent men every where appeal to the Scriptures, as to the oracles of God; deriving all their religious and moral convictions from them, stating events in the same manner, and nearly in the same words, which the sacred historians employ, and describing the accomplishment of prophecies delivered in the books of the Old and New Testament.

It need scarcely be mentioned, that the main proofs in favour of the authority and importance of the sacred writings, are to be drawn from the internal evidence of inspiration which they contain, and from the wonderful connexion and harmony of a scheme, carried on with uniform design, and attested by men miraculously supported through successive ages; but the subsiding proofs which are to be deduced from the documents of human learning, however inferior they may be, are still valuable, and the more so, because they are scattered without connexion or design, in various works, produced by writers who lived in periods remote, and in countries distant from each other, who were not engaged

in any common views, and who had no interest to confirm the sacred accounts.

Connection between the Sacred Writings and the Literature of Jewish and Heathen Authors
2 vols. 8vo. London, 1819. Intro. p. 2.

— WILLIAMS.

TO AN AUDACIOUS PERVERTER OF THE HOLY
SCRIPTURES.

What do I hear ! Is scripture then fulfill'd,
When men indulge their fancy or their spite
Because you chuse to keep your ground untill'd ;
For thorns and briars will you plead a right
Because you waste in luxury and ease
Hours fleeting, that can never be retriev'd ;
Will you perswade, that folly ought to please,
And all your mad harangues to be believ'd ?
Is only your unlawful option, law ?
May those in error, whom they will seduce ?
And ev'n arguments presume to draw
From truth itself to license its abuse ?
Thus that deceiver tempted with a text ;
And he that of his own meer motions sins,
The word of life to murderous aims annex'd,
With Scripture ends, and his assaults begins
But know, the Scripture's holy ; deference pay
To God the author ; no construction seek
Apt for thy turn, thy aim, or jest to day,
But for thy own impartial thought too weak

God sees thy wickedness ; his piercing eye
 And powerful arm thus darest thou incense ?
 His truth, to lyes and to thy sin to tie ;
 His law, to follow after thy offence ?
 Thus should thy servant dare to do by thee,
 How would his copy from thy wisdom please ?
 His making with his Master's word so free ;
 And for obedience, paying repartees ?
 If thus he do his fellow-servants court
 To all licentiousness and disrespect ;
 Sit down and smile at being made their sport ;
 Allow their wit, and wink at their neglect.
 Provok'd with insolencies so bare-fac'd,
 You can't contain ; your fury must have vent :
 Weigh this ; beware, lest God arise in haste ;
 No less provok'd ; on your destruction bent.
 Not diverse weights and measures have, but one ;
 For thine, thy self, and strangers, but one law ;
 Without partiality be all things done ;
 He owns unjust, who does himself withdraw.

*Sacred and Moral Poems, &c., tending to illustrate
 several passages of Holy Scripture ; by a Gentle-
 man of Cambridge. 8vo. London, 1723, p. 102.*

THOMAS ROBINSON, M. A.

Vicar of St. Mary's, Leicester ; was born 1749—died 1813.

The Holy Scriptures are the gracious gift of
 God—an invaluable blessing vouchsafed to man-
 kind. They carry with them indubitable marks
 of their divine original ; and that they are “ writ-

ten by inspiration of God," has been demonstrated "by many infallible proofs." The attempts of infidelity to overturn or weaken the evidence in their favour, have tended only to illustrate and confirm it. But while the out-works of revelation are ably defended, it becomes every sincere inquirer to search out, with great diligence, the sacred treasures deposited therein. Here, alas ! what negligence do we discover ! As if it were enough to know that the Bible is the word of God, we are willingly ignorant of all that it contains ; or else we take up with some crude, undigested notions of divine things, which we have received merely upon trust. The truth, excellence, and importance of the Scriptures, are by most persons assented to ; but, it is feared, few only, in comparison, are giving a serious and diligent attention to them.

An attempt, therefore, to excite men to search the Scriptures for themselves, cannot be needless or unreasonable. This indeed is a study to which curiosity alone might prompt us ; for we shall hereby become acquainted with knowledge the most sublime, and events the most wonderful. But a far nobler motive than curiosity should recommend it to us. We are called to it by the highest authority ; nor can we neglect it without a manifest contempt of God, who, in that sacred book, makes known his will, and requires our unfeigned obedience. Can any thing be more interesting to us than these inquiries,

“Who is the Lord?” and, “What would he have me to do?” “May I not dread his anger?” or, “Is there any way in which I may be restored to his favour?” In these inquiries, so infinitely important to us, the Bible very fully resolves us. Without insisting, therefore, on the beauties of its language, the surprising facts it relates, the grandeur of its representations, and the sublimity of its doctrines, its highest recommendation is—it is “the word of the living God,” and is able to make us wise unto salvation.

*Scripture Characters, edited by the Rev.
P. Hall. 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1837, p. 1.*

REV. EDWARD BICKERSTETH.

RECTOR OF WATTON.

Although much has been wisely and usefully done to illustrate the Bible by commentaries, yet it is evidently of great importance, that it should not be chiefly studied through the medium of uninspired authors. There is a majestic authority, an unaffected and beautiful simplicity and plainness in the word of God, which speaks more powerfully to the heart, than the most laboured expositions. On this account, the writer has been anxious to excite his readers to study, constantly, with fervent prayer, the Sacred Volume itself, (without continually going to other works to guide them in reading it) and thus to take their religious sentiments from the fountain head. The writer from his heart embraces

the great Protestant principle, that it is *every man's duty and privilege to read the Bible for himself*: and the important truth expressed in the sixth article of the Church of England, that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required, of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." He also fully assents to what is stated in the excellent homily on this subject, "That man's human or worldly wisdom or science, is not needful to the understanding of Scripture, but the revelation of the Holy Ghost, who inspireth the true meaning unto them that with humility and diligence do search therefore—"

The Bible is in many respects its own interpreter; it contains in itself the key which will open its treasures.

A Scripture Help designed to assist in Reading the Bible profitably. 8vo. Lond. 1819. Preface.

THE BIBLE AFFORDS A SURE DIRECTION TO GOD, TO
HEAVEN, TO EVERLASTING BLISS.

The Bible is altogether true: "thy word," says Christ "is truth." It is truth without any mixture of error. It is the source and the only unerring standard of all religious truth and knowledge. Men may deceive us, or may deceive themselves; our own minds and hearts

may deceive us, and therefore we are told not to "lean to our own understanding; and not to trust to our own heart;" but the Bible will never deceive us; it is truth that we may always depend and act upon. Hence it is called "a light to our feet and a lamp to our paths;" it renders the way to eternal life manifest and clear.

Some may say, How am I to know that the Bible is true? I will endeavour to tell you. The Bible is evidently an ancient book, written by different persons at different periods, and yet in all its parts promoting one great design. Bad men could not write a book so plainly condemning all sin. Good men would not have deceived mankind by pretending that an invention of their own was a divine revelation; especially when they were likely to get nothing by this deception, but reproach, imprisonment, torture, and death. Its doctrines and precepts are evidently superior to all human wisdom, and directly contrary to that corruption of human nature, which impostors would indulge, as the means of gaining their ends. The Bible points out the way to eternal life; a way honourable to God, suitable to the wants of man; whilst by the strongest arguments it promotes practical holiness, so that you cannot read the book without feeling that it is a holy book. It gives you an account of various *miracles* which could only have been performed by the power of God, which

from their nature could not be deceptions, and which were wrought in the midst of vast multitudes for a purpose worthy of God. The religion of the Bible was, at the time of its promulgation, supported by these miracles ; and has ever since continued in the world. There are various *prophecies* in the Bible, the completion of which shew its divine original. Those concerning Jesus Christ have in a great measure received their accomplishment : these were known to have been written long before his coming. The prophecies concerning Babylon were delivered many ages before they were fulfilled : and the fall and continued ruin of that great city, which at the time when the predictions were delivered no human sagacity could foresee, prove that they were dictated by the inspiration of God. Those prophecies also respecting the Jews which pointed out their dispersion and yet predicted their preservation as a distinct people, are openly fulfilling to the present day in the sight of all men.

The Bible claims our attention on account of the *invaluable truths which it contains*. It discovers to us things which the wisest of men in vain attempted to find out. It shews who is our Creator : his love to us, and our duty to him. It plainly declares what should be our great care and concern in this life ; it affords light to those who are in darkness, rest to the weary, and strength to the weak, and opens to our view the realities of another world.

The Bible is also inexpressibly valuable, because *its truth endures for ever*. The time will come, when all earthly blessings will be taken from us, the friends and relatives who daily comfort us, the wife of our bosom, the children that are dear to us, the possessions which we enjoy, the sun which shines upon us, yea, every earthly good will fail us. All in this world is changing and uncertain: where can we rest? where can we fix our feet and say, this will not sink under me, this will abide for ever? "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." "Heaven and earth," says Christ, "shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Here, then, is something that is valuable in every period and every state. The truth of the Bible is the Christians best support under all the vicissitudes of the present life; and he will find it equally true and increasingly precious in the hour of death, at the day of judgment, and through eternity.

Idem, p. 1. et seq.

RICHARD KING, M. A.

Fellow of New College, Oxford, and Rector of Worthing, Salop.

The sublimity of these divine compositions, and the perfect purity of their moral instruc-

tions, strongly bear the character of their Author, and clearly mark the distinction between the works of man, and the works of God. In reading the best of human compositions, we are tempted to exclaim, "*Nihil magnum sine afflatu divino*;" in reading the inspired writings we are compelled to declare, surely this is the voice of God! In examining the authenticity of these writings, we have the satisfaction to find them established on such proofs as are not to be found in any other pretended revelation; for they contain nothing false, they supply the deficiencies of reason or natural revelation, in explaining the origin of evil, in the doctrine of remission of sins by a Mediator, and of the state of man after death. They also relate things which must be immediately derived from God; such as, the knowledge of the creation of the world, the gift of prophecies and miracles, which were performed by Moses, by the prophets, by Christ and his apostles. No heathen oracles, nor mythology, nor the Koran of Mahomet, can produce such kind of proofs of their authenticity; and we may add that nothing can be advanced to prove the authenticity of any ancient mythology, which cannot be brought as satisfactorily to prove the authenticity of the Scriptures. But further proofs may be adduced. The books of the Old Testament were written in the pure language of the Jews, they were therefore written before the captivity. Those that are acknowledged by

the Samaritans, were written before the division of Israel and Judah (Ante Christum 975), Josephus adverted to no other books: the Seventy translated no other. These proofs furnish sufficient grounds on which we may build our faith. Though the above fully prove the authenticity of the Scriptures, some have contended that we cannot consider them as free from error, on account of the great variety of copies which have been taken of them in all languages, and the various readings that have been discovered in them: But no argument can be drawn from this against the Christian's faith: for though many various readings have been discovered, yet we find every text contains the same laws, the same miracles, the same prophecies, the same chain of history, the same doctrine; every text equally shews that the law came before the gospel, the prophets before the Messiah; that the Redeemer was expected, came, and suffered death, that he established his church, sent her the Comforter, and promised to preserve her in spirit and truth to the end of time. In the whole system therefore of Christian history, Christian doctrine, and Christian morals contained in the Scriptures, there is no article necessary to be known, to be believed, or to be practised, which the text does not explicitly contain. What then was so miraculously preserved, must have been as miraculously inspired. The natural powers of man could not discover the sublime truths of Revela-

tion, nor could his powers record those truths with unerring certainty, without supernatural assistance.

Discourse on the Inspiration of the Scriptures. 8vo. Lond. 1805, p. 6, 7, 8.

REV. ROBERT HAWKER, D.D.

Vicar of the Parish of Charles, Plymouth.

It hath been an object of the most serious consideration with my mind, while going over the *Holy Volume*, for the purpose of forming this commentary; (and once for all, I beg the reader to admit the like impression also) that the Bible is the great charter of grace, and containeth the words of eternal life. Never would I lose sight, if possible, of this discriminating character, by which the *Sacred Records* are forever distinguished from all other writings; that in them is revealed to the fallen race of men, the covenant mercies of God, for our redemption, in and through our Lord Jesus Christ. Here (I would say to myself, as often as I open this blessed book of God) here is contained all that is truly valuable, or interesting for me to know. Here I find every thing that, strictly and properly speaking, I am concerned to be instructed in, as it relates to my present peace and future happiness. In those sweet pages I learn to discover that plan of salvation, which hath called forth the covenant-word, and promise, and oath of Jehovah, for the rescue of our fallen nature,

from sin and eternal death ; and for opening a new and living way unto everlasting life. Here I read of the everlasting love of the Father, and am taught concerning his gracious designs, and manifestations, in the economy of redemption. Here, also, I am brought acquainted with a thousand interesting particulars, which relate to the Person, characters, offices and relations, of the Lord Jesus Christ. What he is in himself, and what he was, and is, and ever will be to his people ; is here sweetly and tenderly related, so as to call forth towards him, the love, and gratitude, and adoration, of every redeemed soul, to all eternity. And here it is, no less, that I learn, what so highly concerns me to know, respecting the Person and operations of the Holy Ghost, from whose teachings, and influences, alone, it must be, that I can acquire my knowledge of the Father's love, or the Redeemer's grace, or have my heart inclined to the love of either. It is he alone who can direct the heart into the love of God, and patient waiting for Jesus Christ. Precious, precious book of God (I would say) be thou my study all the day ; and may mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I may meditate on thy word !

Reader ! may the Almighty God, under whose divine inspiration the Holy Word was written, and without whose teachings, the knowledge of it can never be acquired ; may he graciously open both your eyes, and mine, that we may see won-

derous things of his law. May it be your portion, and mine, to understand more and more, those unerring Oracles of Divine Truth. And as the Lord Jesus Christ, is the sum and substance of both Testaments of Scripture, may we be enabled, by the teachings of his Holy Spirit, to search for Him, as for hidden treasure, in the field of his Sacred Word ; and never give over, untill we have found this Pearl of great price. Of Him (as he saith himself) Moses did write. To Him, gave all the prophets witness. He is the end of the law, for righteousness, to every one that believeth. And therefore, may the Lord Jesus draw near, while we are talking of Him by the way, and make our hearts burn within us, while, by his Holy Spirit, he begins from Moses, and all the prophets, and in the Psalms, to expound unto us in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself. My brother ! will you not join with me in prayer, before you enter upon the perusal of what follows ? Dearest Lord ! be with him that writes these lines, and with him that reads them. Shed abroad, on both, the sweetest of thine influences at every renewed opportunity of searching thy Blessed Word. Give me to know the everlasting love, and covenant mercies of God my Father, made over personally to my own soul, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. And while thy blessed Spirit is helping mine infirmities, by his grace, and taking of the things of Jesus to shew unto me, add this

mercy to the vast treasure, and give me to see my own interest clearly therein. May I never rest satisfied, in barely reading what the Lord Jesus Christ hath done and suffered, in obtaining salvation for his people; may I know, by heartfelt application from the Blessed Spirit, that what He did and suffered, was for me. When I behold his Person, give me, Lord, the right of appropriation to call him mine. When I read his miracles, and works of mercy; may I be enabled to say, this is my Saviour; and when I view Him in all the excellencies of his character, and relations, and offices; like the church of old, may I have the same well-grounded assurance, to say My Beloved is mine and I am his.

The Poor Man's Commentary on the Bible.

4 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1806. Preface, p. 4.

THE HONORABLE ROBERT BOYLE.

A most illustrious Philosopher, devoted his whole time and talents to the improvement of Science, was one of the founders and chief promoters of the Royal Society—died, 1691.

In heaven probably, we shall satisfactorily understand those deep and obscure mysteries of religion, which the profoundest clerks, that love not to flatter themselves, acknowledge, they are unable to comprehend; being, after all the toil and industry of their anxious inquiries, reduced to sit down with the apostle's $\Omega \beta \alpha \theta \omicron \varsigma$, an admiration of that depth, whose bottom they

cannot fathom. There we shall understand those obscure passages of that Divine Book incapable of flattery, the Scripture, which for all that bold critics and learned expositors have attempted to illustrate it, does still continue obscure. There, discerning how exquisitely the several parts of Scripture, are fitted to the several times, persons, and occurrences, wherein their all-foreseeing Author intended most to use them, we shall discern not only a reconcileableness, but a friendship, and perfect harmony betwixt those texts, that here seem most at variance ; and shall discover not only the sense of the obscurer passages, but the requisiteness of their having been written so obscurely. That strange and peculiar, as well as otherwise cryptical method and style of Scripture, which often costs us so much study to find it rational, we shall there discover to be admirable and worthy of its omniscient Author. There, I hope, we shall have clearly expounded to us those riddles of Providence, which have, but too often, tempted even good men to question God's conduct in the government of the world. The shortness of our transitory lives not permitting us to continue long enough spectators here, to see above a scene or two at most of that great play acted by mankind upon the stage of the world, 'tis no wonder we are apt to harbour sinister thoughts of the contriver of a plot, whose neither beginning nor end we are acquainted with : which is no less

injurious, than it were to censure the lofty tragedian Seneca, or some other matchless artist, having perused but a piece of some tragedy, whereof the latter part never arrived at our view. But, when once God's whole plot (if I may so speak), and conduct in the administration of the world, shall come to be disclosed; all those revolutions, and occurrences of empires, states, families, and particular persons, which men are here so prone to quarrel with, will there appear so just, so requisite, and so reasonable, that those very things, which here tempt us to deny God, shall there engage us to praise him; and we shall not so properly be satisfied with his providence, as ravished. Yes, all that unwelcome darkness, that here surrounded our purblind understandings, will vanish at the dawning of that bright, and (as St. Peter's expression may be interpreted) eternal day, wherein the resolution of all those difficulties, which here exercised, and perhaps distressed, our faith, shall be granted us to reward it. And I must profess (as unfashionable as such a profession may seem in a gentleman not yet two and twenty) that I find the study of those excellent themes, God's Word, and his providence, so difficult, and yet so pleasing and inviting, that could heaven afford me no greater blessing than a clear account of the abstruse mysteries of divinity and providence, I should value the having my understanding gratified and enriched with truths of

so noble and precious a nature, enough to court heaven at the rate of renouncing for it all those unmanly sensualities and trifling vanities, for which inconsiderate mortals are wont to forfeit the interest, their Saviour so dearly bought them in it.

Seraphic Love, p. 154—159.

ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES, 1648.

I. Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and Providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men unexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation. Therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers maners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church, and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world; to commit the same wholly unto writing: which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of Gods revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.

II. Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written; are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these; (here the canonical books of

the Old and New Testament are enumerated) all which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.

III. The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of, than other humane writings.

IV. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church; but wholly upon God (who is truth it self) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.

V. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church, to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of mans salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the intire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence it self to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding our full perswasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word, in our hearts.

VI. The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, mans salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word: and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to humane actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

VII. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all: yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.

VIII. The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old,) and the New Testament in Greek, (which at the time of the writing of it was most gene-

rally known to the nations) being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical; so as, in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal unto them. But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner; and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.

IX. The infallable rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture it self: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one) it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.

X. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined; and, in whose sentence we are to rest; can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.

*Articles of the Christian Religion,
passed by both Houses of Parlia-
ment. 4to. Lond. 1648. p. 1 to 6.*

WILLIAM WALES HORNE,

M. G. City Chapel, Grub Street.

THE UNIVERSAL SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.

The God of glory sends his gospel forth ;
Ye heralds, sound his grace from south to north :
From east to west his sov'reign mercy spread,
That saves and raises sinners from the dead !
The Gospel sounds, Hell trembles, Heaven re-
joices,
While ransom'd sinners praise with thankful
voices !

No more the sinner mourns his long delay ;
But tastes his grace, and owns his sov'reign
sway !
The Lord descends and brings his ransom'd
nigh ;—
Mercy and love attend him down the sky !
When God appears, his churches all adore him ;
While sinners tremble, yet rejoice before him !

Ye weary souls draw near, ye guilty come,
In Mercy's arms for you there yet is room !
But he must gather, first, by sov'reign pow'r,
And willing make you in the destin'd hour ;
When Christ descends, wake every cheerful
passion ;
Ye sinners shout, he comes for your salvation !

Soon shall the gospel sound from pole to pole,
And be the joy of ev'ry ransom'd soul :
Then Antichrist shall fall to rise no more,
And grace triumphant sound from shore to
shore !
Lift up your heads, ye saints, with expectation,
For Christ shall reign the joy of ev'ry nation !

FRANCIS BLACKBURNE, M.A.

Archdeacon of Cleaveland; born at Richmond, in York-
shire, 1705—died 1787.

They who read the Bible with this compass of reflection, will find, that, after all the most able and ingenious commentators have done, the Scriptures are the best explainers of themselves, and that they seldom fail, in some passages, to clear up or account for what may appear difficult, dark, and embarrassed in others. One may venture to promise that, by this comprehensive attention, a fund of scriptural knowledge may be acquired by those who understand only their mother tongue, to a degree which would exceed the proficiency even of scholars, who either confine their studies and inquiries to particular books or portions of Holy Writ, or extend them farther without considering the times and characters to which particular revelations are adapted, and the relation they have to others which preceded them, or were to follow them. Our translation, it is true, is faulty in many respects, and seems to call upon

those in authority for a careful and accurate revision : but, with all its faults, it leaves the scope and progression of the Creator's grand dispensation sufficiently discernible and coherent to a diligent and capable reader, even without those helps which have been added from the revival and improvement of sound literature since the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Short Discourse on the Study of the Scriptures. 8vo. York, 1763. P. 29.

WILLIAM WINSTANLEY HULL.

Of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at Law, late Fellow of Brazen Nose College, Oxford.

Assuming that a revelation has been made ; that, by inspired messengers, we have been taught truths, which without such messengers we could not have believed, could not have been taught ; and these, also, truths essential for our restoration to that image in which Adam was created, and existed until his fall ; each man's first inquiry must be, who these inspired messengers were, and what lessons they taught : in other words, our Bible must be proved genuine and authentic, and a true construction must be put upon its words. Christianity depends upon our use of the Bible. If individuals differ in the construction they put on the Bible, the majority, in such cases of difference, will consider that construction which differs from theirs as an error, because it differs from their

own: and if the error be deemed material, will seldom think themselves justified in holding communion with the dissidents; some of them, possibly, led to this conclusion by pride and hardness of heart, and some by misunderstanding the expressions of the Bible in Jewish mouths, but many by zeal for the cause of truth, and by jealousy for the honour of their Maker. The individuals who thus differ, are supposed to differ on grounds which seem, in their opinion, to support their difference against the majority. Now beyond this point we cannot get: on earth there is not any better, any other, authority for them, or against them: arguments cannot give understanding. Each of us, whether in the minority or majority, must, at our own peril, abide by his own conscience, and stand or fall to his own master. Using, for the present, language somewhat incorrect, the adoption of a right creed, unless, or rather until, we make it our own in heart, cannot be of any possible service, cannot be religious, cannot but be superstitious in its tendency. Whatever be our profession of faith, it is a falsehood in terms, if the faith be not ours. Forms of words, adopted in ignorance or indolence, and part knowledge, or against our will, have not any power. The stream of electricity will not light up the characters, unless they be made of capable metal. Christianity by compulsion, an involuntary service of God, is impossible. Every

man who serves God, must serve him from his heart, in such way as he may believe conformable to the will of God: and for the latter purpose, he will endeavour to ascertain the words of revelation, and their due meaning. However unlearned he may be, he is a judge of the moral character of the doctrines propounded to him, can try them by this sure, inseparable, and most general test, and so far can have an opinion of his own. And it is very observable, that the increase of Christianity gives increasing means, of bringing itself to this test: and itself makes greater the demands against itself, by continually raising, what has been perversely called the natural sense of right and wrong. The light of justice burns brighter, as the atmosphere becomes more oxygenated: and, contrary to the rule in physics, the atmosphere of Christianity grows more and more capable of maintaining the light of the Gospel, as that light burns brighter and more glorious to behold.

An Inquiry concerning the Means and Expedience for proposing and making any changes in the Canons, Articles, or Liturgy, &c. 8vo. Oxford, 1828.

REV. JAMES HERVEY, A.M.

Rector of Weston Flavell and Collingtree; a very popular English divine, of exemplary piety and virtue; born 1713-14—died 1758.

The penmen of the Old Testament, carry all the marks of the most disinterested and unde-

signing sincerity. They record the failings of their favourite and most illustrious heroes; without concealing the punishment, inflicted on such miscarriages.—The uniform tendency of their narratives and observations is, to promote a religion the most pure, the most benevolent, the most elevated imaginable; as remote from all selfish aims, and every low art of collusion, as the heavens are higher than the earth.—They were men singularly qualified for their work; being either eye-witnesses of the facts, they relate; or else cotemporaries with the persons, they describe; or still more remarkably distinguished, by their ability to work miracles, and their insight into futurity.—As to the facts related, some of them had anniversary solemnities, on which they were commemorated: some of them had significant ceremonies, by which they were represented. They were publicly read in the synagogues, and universally known through the nation. It was a duty of religion, to talk of them by day, to meditate on them by night, and diligently to instruct the children in them. And were not these circumstances a security, an inviolable security, against any attempt to corrupt, to innovate, or alter?—So that their writings appear with every character, both internal and external, of genuine truth; and with the most unquestionable credentials, from the God of power, and God of wisdom. Consequently, they have a credibility of their own:

sufficient both to claim, and to support, the faith of an antient Jew. Such as must command the assent of every rational and honest inquirer, even before the Christian dispensation took place.

If my lord Bolingbroke had duly adverted to these considerations; surely, he would have expunged that bold and rash assertion, “without Christianity we have no obligation to believe the Old Testament.”—Surely, he would never have left behind him, that unwarrantable and injurious insinuation;—That the Hebrew original deserves no better credit, than the fabulous story of the Septuagint translation.—Nor have found any reason to “protest, that he knew of no rule to go by” (in settling the degree of assent, due to the several parts of the Old Testament) but the fanciful distinction, which has already been examined.—He would rather have found reason to adopt and subscribe Agur’s confession of faith. A man who was famous in his own, who will be famous in every generation; and for this, among other most judicious maxims; Every word of God is pure. ’Tis all gold, fine gold, without any the least alloy.

For my part, I freely acknowledge to your ladyship, that I value the sacred history (even exclusive of its connection with the transcendent glories of Christ, and the unspeakable benefits of redemption) on the very same principles, which incline our connoisseurs to value those celebrated antiques, they call medals singular.

Because, it is supposed, there is but one of the sort extant.—Considering the private interests and personal attachments, which are so apt to biass the human mind; considering the imperfect information, and ignorance of causes, to which all other writers are unavoidably subject; I cannot but conclude, that the Sacred History is, in point of strict, precise, universal veracity, SINGULAR. There is none other besides this, no, not one in the whole world, that is free from all the false colourings of prejudice; clouded with no mixture of uncertainty; most minutely true; and to be depended on in every particular. The Sacred History, is not only seated on the throne of truth; but, in these respects, possesses it without a rival.

The Scriptures throw light upon the most memorable transactions, that have passed in the heathen world, and are recorded by the classic authors.—When the Assyrian monarch subdues kingdoms, and ravages nations; we are apt to think, he is only gratifying his insatiable ambition. But the Scripture assures us, that he was the staff in Jehovah's hand, and the rod of his indignation. An instrument, made use of by the King of kings, to execute his righteous vengeance.—When Cyrus is habituated to all the noble exercises, educated in all the fine accomplishments, that form the gallant prince, and constitute the complete general; Xenophon sees nothing more, than the exertion of human

policy. But Isaiah beholds the all super-intending arm of the Lord, girding this hero, and preparing him for the deliverance of his people.—So that the Scripture-history is itself the grandest and most useful; while its inter-current observations, are a key to open the most celebrated affairs, which give weight and estimation to other annals.

The grandest and most useful.—This will appear to be more than a bare assertion, if we recollect; that here is a display of that great Messiah, who is the hope of Israel, and the desire of all nations. A display of him, in his mysterious incarnation; his wonderful person; and all the gracious, the benign majesty of his mediatorial offices. From the original promise (made to our first parent) through all its progressive evolutions; till he arises in the New Testament, as the only-begotten of the Father; with a lustre and dignity, suitable to so divine a personage.—Which is an event, of such incomparable condescension, magnificence, and grace, that all the prophets bear witness to it, and the very angels desire to look into it.

How then must your ladyship be surprised, to see Lord Bolingbroke undertaking to assign the principal scope of the Mosaic history (the former part of it at least) and not enlarging, not dwelling upon, no, nor so much as mentioning, the Redeemer. That all-glorious, all-important Redeemer, who is the sum and substance

of the whole Scriptures: the Alpha and Omega in all the Revelations of God.—Of whom Moses wrote, and whose day Abraham saw.—Whose righteousness was preached by Noah, and his final Advent foretold by Enoch.—Whose merits, apprehended by faith, were the recommendation of Abel's sacrifice; and the consolation of Adam, under the loss of immortality, and expulsion from paradise.—From whom many, if not all, the ante-diluvian patriarchs, borrow their honours; and stand upon everlasting record, chiefly as being in the number of his progenitors.—This capital omission is (to use his lordship's own language) "a manifest abuse of Sacred History, and quite 'inexcusable in a writer, who knew, or should have known," that, in its most early as well as in its later periods, it invariably testifies of Christ.

Thus to undertake, and thus to execute, is as if some pretender to anatomy, should engage to explain the nature of animal motion; and say not a word, concerning the nerves, the muscles, the heart. Or, as if some smatterer in geography, should offer to exhibit a complete map of our country; and leave intirely out of his plan, the cities, the towns, and the rivers.—Yet, this is not the only incident, on which my Lord, however critical in profane literature, discovers himself to have been very remiss in the study, at least very superficial in the knowledge, of his Bible.

From which hint I would take occasion to intreat, and with the most affectionate earnestness, all that are inclined to dispute against this Divine Book, first to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with it.—And would they once set about the momentous work, with a candid, upright, and impartial mind : free from the jaundice of prejudices ; not blinded with the fumes of self-conceit ; nor intoxicated with the cup of vicious pleasure : If they would thus examine the inspired volumes, they would soon perceive such a lovely constellation of truth, of wisdom, and of grace, shining forth from every page ; as must turn their disesteem into admiration, and their aversion into delight.

In the Sacred Narrations, we behold the arm of the Lord revealed.—Other historians, only guess at the interposition of an avenging, or propitious God. And, though conjectures of this kind, occur but very rarely, in their works ; they are frequently censured, as a presumptuous intrusion upon the arcana of Heaven.—But the pen-men of Scripture, with unerring certainty declare ; This is the Lord's doing : a stroke from the sword of his justice, or a reward from the riches of his goodness.

Here we perceive, as in the brightest mirrour, what practices he favours, and what methods he opposes : what courses are attended with his blessing, and what behaviour provokes his displeasure.—These records set before us the most

striking exemplifications, both of the divine threatnings, and of the divine promises : demonstrating, from repeated experience, that the former, are more than vain menaces ; the latter, are far from alluring fallacies. By which means, they are admirably well adapted, to inculcate those fundamental lessons of practical religion—a continual advertence to God—a believing dependence on God—and an habitual expectation of success in our schemes, not merely from any address or industry of our own, but from the all-powerful benediction of God.—Which are, of all other precepts, perhaps, the most salutary and beneficial to mankind.

My remarks would be immoderately prolix, were they to enumerate all the perfections of Sacred History. I shall content myself with wishing, that your ladyship may esteem, may reverence, may love the whole Book of God—only in proportion to its worth. Then, I am persuaded, it will have your highest esteem, your profoundest reverence, and most devoted love.

Before I conclude, give me leave, Madam, to make one request. Which I make, under a sense of my various obligations to your ladyship ; with all the engaging acts of your condescension and generosity, full in my view. It ought therefore to be, and it really is, expressive of the most unfeigned thankfulness for your favours, and of the truest zeal for your happiness. It

is this—That you would carry on a daily intercourse, and cultivate a holy, an intimate familiarity, with the inspired writers, and their inestimable volumes. — Read them. Recollect them. Weigh them.—Contemplate them, in their magnificent whole; in their beautiful parts; and their harmonious connections.

I should be afraid to recommend, in this zealous manner, and to this assiduous perusal, the most correct compositions, that ever proceeded from a human pen. But here, I am under no apprehension, of your exhausting the mine, and complaining of emptiness: under no apprehension, lest the entertainment should flatten upon your taste, and create disgust. The more we search those store-houses of wisdom; the better we understand those oracles of truth; the more they will approve themselves to our judgment, and become dearer, still dearer to our affections.—The pages of Scriptures, like the productions of nature, will not only endure the test, but improve upon the trial. The application of the microscope to the one, and a repeated meditation on the other, are sure to display new beauties, and present us with higher attractives.—Nay, the very attempts of an adversary to blacken the Scriptures, serve only to encrease their lustre. For my part, I never should have seen the prediction of Noah, rising, with such perspicuity, propriety, and glory, to

observation; had not Lord Bolingbroke made an effort, to over-whelm it with objections, and sink it into discredit.

Above all, may we bring to this best of studies, an humble mind. A mind, deeply sensible of its own ignorance and weakness; yet frequently and chearfully lifted up to God, for his enlightening and animating Spirit. That, by his blessed influences, our understandings may be opened to understand the Scriptures, and our hearts opened to receive them: to understand them, in all the fulness of their heavenly meaning; to receive them, in all the force of their transforming power.—That, reading the threatenings, we may tremble at the awful word; and acknowledge ourselves justly liable, to those terrible judgments.

May this proof, Madam, be written on your heart—written in bright and indelible characters—written by the finger of the living God!—Then, I am assured, every attempt to stagger your belief, or withdraw your veneration from the Bible; will be like an attempt, to shatter the rock in pieces with a bubble, or to pierce the adamant with a feather.—

Remarks on Lord Bolingbroke's Letters on the Study of History, in a Letter to a Lady, 2nd edit. Lond. p. 45, et seq.

WILLIAM DE SALLUSTE DU
BARTAS.

A French Poet, the son of a treasurer in France ; was born in 1544, at Montfort in Armagnac—died 1590.

Soft, soft, my muse, launch not into the deep,
Sound not this Sea : see that aloof thou keep
From this Charybdis and Capharean rock
Where many a ship hath suffered wofull wrack,
While they have fondly vent'red forth too far
Following frail reason for their only star.
Who on this gulf would safely venture fain,
Must not too boldly hale into the main,
But 'longst the shoar with sailes of faith must
coast,

Their star the Bible ; steer-man the Holy
Ghost.

How many fine wits have the world abus'd
Because this Ghost they for their guide refus'd
And, scorning of the loyall Virgins thred,
Have them and others in this maze mis-led ?
In sacred sheets of either Testament
'Tis hard to find a higher argument
More deep to sound, more busy to discuss,
More use-full known ; unknowne, more dan-
gerous.

So bright a sun dazels my tender sight :
So deep discourse my sense confoundeth quite :

My reason's edge is dull'd in this dispute,
And in my mouth, my fainting words be mute.

*Du Bartas his Divine Weekes, translated
by Joshua Sylvester, fol. 1633, p. 2.*

ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

A native of Suffolk, and an eminent Mathematician and Divine, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge; born 1630—died 1677.

The Scriptures affirm themselves to be written for common instruction, comfort, edification in all piety, they do therefore recommend themselves to be studyed and searched by all people, as the best and surest means of attaining knowledge, and finding truth. The fathers do also exhort people, (even women and girles) constantly to reade, and diligently to study the Scriptures.

Works, 3 vols. fol. London, 1686. Vol. i. p. 283.

Let us, with incessant diligence of study, meditate upon the *best of histories*, wherein the tenour of his divine practice is represented to us; revolving frequently in our thoughts all the most considerable passages thereof, entertaining them with devout passions, impressing them on our memories, and striving to express them in our conversations; let us endeavour continually to walk in the steps of our Lord.

Id. vol. iii. p. 38.

JOSHUA SYLVESTER.

A Poet who flourished in the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First ; was born in 1563—died 1618.

AN ELOGIE AND EPITOME OF THE BIBLE.

This Sacred Volume, in whose precious leaves
The mysteries of Heaven entreasur'd lye ;
Is a cleere mirror, which no forme deceaves ;
Th' object and subject of each Christian eye :
Who lives *by this*, by death can never dye :
Here shines the *sun* of *grace*, diffusing wide
His quickning raies on all, from side to side.

Here God and man do's both embrace each
other ;

Met in *one person*, Heaven and do's kisse ;
Here a pure *Virgin* do's become a *mother*,
And bare that Son, who the worlds Father is,
And maker of his mother. Here true *blisse*
Comes flying from the bosome of the High,
And clothes *it selfe* in naked misery,
To drag man out of Hells darke empery.

*Panthea: or Divine Wishes and
Meditations*, 4to. 1630. Appendix.

WILLIAM HERBERT.

Of Pointington—1646.

Our parents ambition, to increase their knowledge, is the cause of our ignorance. They would know more, then was lawfull ; and

therefore we know lesse, then is needfull ; They burnt our candle, and left us in the darke. There we grope long, before we can see anie thing. We must studie, heare and reade much, to get some glimpse of that great light, they lost ; yea of our paines we reape but little fruit, unles God blesse our indevours.

The Sunne casts a delightfull light, and fire hath a comfortable heat ; yet he, who with bold eyes gazes too much upon the sunne, may lose his sight ; and he likewise, who goes too neere the fire, is in great danger of burning. A wise distance must be observ'd. So this Scripture is both pleasant and comfortable ; yet we must not reade in it the presumption of our strength, out of a curious mind to know more then we should ; lest our short wits be drown'd in the deep sea of divine mysteries.

The Scripture is like Moses' rod transformed into a serpent ; for, as he was afraid at the strange sight of it, till God taught him to take it by the taile ; so no doubt this great Book should make a man start back, unles he take it by the end : for, all its beginning is full of curses 'gainst sinners ; but its end containes sweet comforts. The law doth load, fright and curse us ; but by the Gospel we are eas'd, assur'd and blest.

This Book is the touchstone of all human learning ; for, by it, I doe see whats good, or ill in all others, O then, my soule, love it above others.

This is a Book, whose instructions are true, whose precepts are all good, and whose promises are happie ; for 'tis the word of God, who is the truth, goodness and happiness it selfe.

This is a glasse, in which I see my selfe in a threefold estate of innocence, corruption and regeneration.

This is againe a glasse, in which I see both my selfe and all things in three different times, past, present and future. The first concerns me not, the second is but a moment, the last is perpetuall. Yet time past gives me instructions, to order the present ; this workes for the future, and this future shall be happie or unhappie, as the present makes it.

This is a light, which discovers most hidden things. With this torch I see mine owne heart stufte with malice, and compassed with miserie ; but withal I spie one, by whose grace malice's rooted out, and miserie exil'd.

Here are threatnings for obstinat sinners ; pardon for mourning soules, and rewards for good men. Here the poore wretch finds comfort against want, and the rich man distrust of his riches. Here are cordials for faint persons, and cooling brothe for selfe-presuming men. Here's a wedding for wise virgins, and a fire for hot whoremongers. Here humble ignorance becomes wisdom, and proud wisdom is accounted follie. What other Book can hold so much as this ?

Here Christ appeares as a way, truth and life ; way, to leade us to salvation, truth to keep our minds from error ; and life to free our soules from everlasting death.

What fearfull speech is this ? Am I guilty of those accursed sins, which kindle Gods wrath against men ?

How comfortable is this sentence : Can I applie it to my selfe, as being one of them, to whom such things are meant ?

My soule is toucht with heavines at the reading of this ; grieve melts my heart, so that I seem to be another man then I was even now. Surely this change proceeds from God ; to shew his love he gives me these godlie motions ; thus to withdraw my soule from sin.

This is good counsell. Would my soule follow it, how happie should she be. In earth she should have peace, and in heaven glorie.

Here vice and vertue are set forth in their severall hues ; vice clothed with darkness, vertue adorned with light : vice sitting down on the brim of the infernall pit, vertue standing at the gate of heaven.

Here error is discredited, and hereticks condemn'd. Should all Christians rule their faith and actions by the principles of this Book, they would find but one way to heaven, and none at all to hell. Their swordes and armes should gather rust, and their divided hearts should be link'd againe together.

These words are darke ; therefore I thinke, that either their knowledge is not necessarie unto my salvation, or that God is angrie with me, because he holds my eyes, that I may not know him, although himself speake unto me.

Herbert's Quadripartit Devotion. 12mo. Lond. 1648. p. 13.

THOMAS LORD ERSKINE.

One of the most eloquent advocates of modern times ; was born 1750—died 1823.

For my own part, gentlemen, I have been ever deeply devoted to the truths of Christianity, and my firm belief in the Holy Gospel is by no means owing to the prejudices of education (though I was religiously educated by the best of parents,) but it arises from the most continued reflections of my riper years and understanding. It forms, at this moment, the great consolation of a life, which, as a shadow, must pass away ; and without it, indeed, I should consider my long course of health and prosperity (perhaps too long and too uninterrupted to be good for any man) only as the dust which the wind scatters, rather as a snare than as a blessing.

Trial of Williams for publishing Paine's Age of Reason, 24th June, 1797.

THOMAS DILKE, ESQ.

The translation of the Bible only, independently of the advantages derived by religion and pure morality, was of great and essential ad-

vantage ; it opened to all the purest springs of knowledge, and wisdom, and poetry ; and the dramatic writers of that age availed themselves of the advantages it held out : it must be evident to every man conversant in their writings, that it was their constant and undeviating study ; it was “familiar to them as household words,” what wonder is it then that containing, as it does, “the noblest poems that ever were wrote in the world,” they should catch “some of the sacred fire,” some of that noble daring and enthusiasm that every where animate and enlighten the works of their inspired masters ?

Old plays ; a continuation of Dodsley's Collection. 6 vols. 8vo. 1816. Preface.

ROBERT BURTON.

Born at Lindley, 1576—died 1639—40.

The Scripture it self, is like an apothecaries shop, where in are all remedies for all infirmities of minde, purgatives, cordials, alteratives, corrolatives, lenitives, &c. ; every disease of the soul saith Austin, *hath a peculiar medicine in the Scripture ; this onely is required, that the sick man take the potion which God hath already tempered.* Gregory calls it *a glass wherein we may see all our infirmities ; ignitum colloquium.* Psalm 119, 140. Origen a charme. And therefore Hierome prescribes Rustius the monk *continually to read the Scripture, and to*

meditate on that which he hath read ; for, as mastication is to meat, so is meditation to what we read.

Anatomy of Melancholy, reprint.

8vo. London, 1836, p. 256.

SIR JOHN HAYWARD, LL. D.

An English Historian, and a man of considerable note in the reign of Queen Elizabeth—died 1627.

The second meanes which God hath used to retire us from sinne are the holy Scriptures ; delivered unto us by himselfe as lively registers of that eternall lawe, which before he had more obscurely written only in the booke of nature. These Scriptures are unto us as letters of God's love, inviting us to good and deterring us from evill ; by propounding many rewards for the one and punishments for the other. Some in this life (whereof in all ages we may observe pregnant examples) but most especially in the life to come ; threatning at that time the torment of hell, and promising the joyes of heaven, to the intent to bridle our wantonnesse by the one, and to spurre on our slothfulnesse by the other.

Sanctuarie of a Troubled Soule.

12mo. London, 1616, p. 354.

DR. ADAM CLARKE, F.S.A., M.R.I.A.

The Sacred Writings are a system of pure unsophisticated *reason*, proceeding from the im-

maculate mind of God: in many places, it is true, vastly elevated *beyond* what the reason of man could have devised or found out; but in no case *contrary* to human reason. They are addressed not to the passions, but to the reason, of man; every *command* is urged *with reasons of obedience*; and every *promise* and *threatening* founded on the most evident *reason* and propriety. The whole, therefore, are to be rationally understood, and rationally interpreted. He who would discharge reason from this, its noblest province, is a friend in his heart to the anti-christian maxim, "Ignorance is the mother of devotion." Revelation and reason go hand in hand: faith is the servant of the former, and the friend of the latter; while the Spirit of God, which gave the *revelation*, improves and exalts *reason*, and gives energy and effect to faith.

Commentary on the New Testament. 4to. 1817.

No man either can or should believe a doctrine that *contradicts* reason: but he may safely credit (in anything that concerns the nature of God) what is *above* his reason: and even this may be a reason why he should believe it. I cannot comprehend the Divine Nature, therefore I adore it: if I could comprehend, I could not adore; forasmuch as the nature or being which can be comprehended by my mind, must be less than that by which it is comprehended, and therefore unworthy of its homage. The more knowledge

increases, the more we shall see that *reason* and *learning*, sanctified by piety towards God, are the best interpreters of the Sacred Oracles.

Idem.

JOHN GREGORY.

The miracle of his age for critical and curious learning, was born at Amersham, Bucks, 1607; he attained to a learned eloquence in English, Latin, and Greek, and to an excellent skill, in Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldee, Arabic, Ethiopic, &c., and to a familiar acquaintance with the Jewish Rabbines, Ancient Fathers, and modern critics.

An indifferent man of any nation under heaven could not deny but that this book throughout discovereth an incomprehensible secret power and excellency enabled to make any man whatsoever wise to salvation. And that canon of it which is undoubtedly received on all hands is sufficiently entire. You must not reckon of the Scripture by its bulk. It were the biggest book in the world if it were less than it is, and it was purposely fitted to that proportion it hath that it might compare and comply with our size and magnitude. If you would have all written that Solomon disputed, "from the cedar in Liban to the Hyssop that grows upon the wall," or all that which was done and said by "One that was greater than he," and "spake as never man did," the world itself would not be able to contain the books that should be written.

Works. Introduction.

There is one book more, besides the great

volume of the world, written out by God himself, such a one as may indefatigably be meditated in day and night. This indeed is the only text we have, all other books, and arts and men, and the world itself are but notes upon this.

Idem.

NATHANIEL INGELÖ, D.D.

A Divine of the Seventeenth Century—died 1683.

I have now, proceeded Philalathes (a lover of truth) given you the characters of all Antitheus (an anti-god) his companion, except Antigra-phus (one opposed to the Holy Scriptures) and I must not omit him ; for as he joins with Scepticus (one who believes nothing) and Hypsagoras (a lofty speaker) in decrying the conduct of natural religion, so he hath a particular delight in vilifying the assurances of Divine Revelation. His common sport is to jeer at religion, and he thinks they have but a foolish wit who scruple to make a jest of any thing. He says that Protagoras was but a cowardly fellow, because he did not write more positively, and reviles the Athenians for burning his books ; only he says that they did something to expiate their crime by giving hemlock to that troublesome moralist Socrates. He is deputed by Antitheus to quarrel with all books which contradict the opinions and practices of his sect, especially to disparage the authority of the Holy Gospel: which he endeavours

sometimes by taking occasion where none is given, to blame the matter, sometimes he dislikes the style ; sometimes he falls foul upon the author, sometimes reviles his scribes ; sometimes he pretends an incongruity in the historical narrations, at other times he vilifies the rational sense : Being unable to distinguish between seeming differences and real contradictions ; or to explain things which are obscurely expressed, he puts the dishonour of his own imperfections upon others, and accuseth the holy writers sometimes of falshood, alwayes of ignorance. Sometimes he quotes the personal infirmities of some writers which they have confess'd, and makes what he had never known but that they told him, objections against their books ; expressing malice where they have only shewn ingenuity : for it was not imprudence but humility in them to acknowledge their own weaknesses, whose design was not to do honour to themselves, but to serve their Great Master ; and made it impossible for generous persons to think that they would lie in his behalf, when they spoke true against their own interest. Sometimes he abuseth that Holy Book by taking single words and pieces of sentences out of several places, and putting them together, as if he were making a *Cento Biblicus* : by this means forcing them to express a ridiculous sense, which those divine leaves abhor, and endeavouring to make others think that they favour absurd things, though whosoever turns

them over, knows that if they mention them in one place, they condemn them in twenty. But such unworthiness doth become one that hath taken some of the fragments of Celsus, the worst leaves in Lucian, and having bound them together with some of the most putrid pieces of Vaninus, Aretine, and Rablais, hath made them his Bible.

In the height of his impudence he forgeth blasphemous cavils against the unspotted innocence, the perfect goodness and unparralleled prudence of the great prince Anaxanacton (king of kings), and asperseth his discipline as a thing founded in ignorance, and which exposeth those which entertain it to scorn and injury; wilfully neglecting to see that which is visible to all that can reade. That as Anaxanacton was the mirrour of absolute perfection in his own example, so his Gospel is full of wise counsels and prudent rules: that it is adorn'd with the noblest explications of vertue, and doth so much tend to the melioration of the world, that no method was before discover'd which in any respect could be equall'd with it; and hath so fully spoken to all important cases, that nothing can be added to make it more complete or useful; and hath its credibility so strongly supported, that no other books can come into competition, nor any caviller be successfully malicious: its divine authority being first signified by prophecy

and miracles, and the truth of what is said in honour of it confirm'd by universal tradition.

Bentivolio and Urania. Lond. folio, p. 165, 6, 7.

WILLIAM GODWIN.

A celebrated writer ; and was born at Wisbeach, in Cambridgeshire, in 1756—died 7th April, 1836.

And such, my friends, was the character of Jesus. Such was he that was *despised and rejected* of the Jews ; such was the man, whom we preach, and whose gospel is now sounding in your ears. And are these the traits of a character merely human ? Does the nature of which we partake use to exhibit qualities like these ? How is this nature described by the pen of infallibility ? Why, “there is not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable.” What resemblance can we find, what common features can ye trace, between this character, and that we have been exhibiting ? If none, then let us own the truth, and let us act up to it like men. “It is the voice of a God and not of a man. Truly this was the Son of God, truly this was the King of Israel.” By no hand but that of God could the picture be drawn ; from no seat but that of heaven could its archetype descend. The artfullest deceiver, the most practised impostor could never have played such a cheat upon us. Can the most consummate vice pre-

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*Sketches of History. Six Ser-
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sent us with a model of virtue? the nicest hypocrisy adorn itself in every grace of which humanity is capable?

Sketches of History. Six Sermons. 12mo. London. 1784.

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D.

The great bulk of Christians have no access to the Bible in its original languages; but they have access to the common translation, and they may be satisfied by the concurrent testimony of the learned among the different sectaries of this country, that the translation is a good one. We do not confine the principle to critics and translators; we press it upon all. We call upon them not to form their divinity by independent thinking, but to receive it by obedient reading, to take the words as they stand, and submit to the plain English of the Scriptures which lie before them. It is the office of a translator to give a faithful representation of the original. Now that this faithful representation has been given, it is our part to peruse it with care, and to take a fair and a faithful impression of it. It is our part to purify our understanding of all its previous conceptions. We must bring a free and unoccupied mind to the exercise. It must not be the pride or the obstinacy of self-formed opinions, or the haughty independence of him who thinks he has reached the manhood of his understanding. We must

bring with us the docility of a child, if we want to gain the kingdom of heaven. It must not be a partial, but an entire and unexcepted obedience. There must be no garbling of that which is entire, no darkening of that which is luminous, no softening down of that which is authoritative or severe. The Bible will allow of no compromise. It professes to be the directory of our faith, and claims a total ascendancy over the souls and the understandings of men. It will enter into no composition with us, or our natural principles. It challenges the whole mind as its due, and it appeals to the truth of heaven for the high authority of its sanctions. "Who-soever addeth to, or taketh from, the words of this book, is accursed," is the absolute language in which it delivers itself. This brings us to its terms. There is no way of escaping after this. We must bring every thought into the captivity of its obedience, and, as closely as ever lawyer stuck to his document or his extract, must we abide by the rule and the doctrine which this authentic memorial of God sets before us.

Now we hazard the assertion, that, with a number of professing Christians, there is not this unexcepted submission of the understanding to the authority of the Bible; and that the authority of the Bible is often modified, and in some cases superseded by the authority of other principles. One of these principles is the reason of the thing. We do not know if this principle

would be at all felt or appealed to by the earliest Christians. It may perhaps by the disputatious or the philosophising among converted Jews and Greeks, but not certainly by those of whom Paul said, that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, were called." They turned from dumb idols to serve the living and the true God. There was nothing in their antecedent theology which they could have any respect for: nothing which they could confront, or bring into competition with the doctrines of the New Testament. In those days, the truth as it is in Jesus came to the mind of its disciples, recommended by its novelty, by its grandeur, by the power and recency of its evidences, and above all by its vast and evident superiority over the fooleries of a degrading Paganism. It does not occur to us, that men in these circumstances would ever think of sitting in judgment over the mysteries of that sublime faith which had charmed them into an abandonment of their earlier religion. It rather strikes us, that they would rather receive them passively; that, like scholars, who had all to learn, they would take their lesson as they found it; that the information of their teachers would be enough for them; and that the restless tendency of the human mind to speculation, would for a time find ample enjoyment in the rich and splendid discoveries which broke like a flood of light upon the world. But we are in different cir-

cumstances. To us, these discoveries, rich and splendid as they are, have lost the freshness of novelty. The Sun of Righteousness, like the sun in the firmament, has become familiarised to us by possession. In a few ages, the human mind deserted its guidance, and rambled as much as ever in quest of new speculations. It is true, that they took a juster and a loftier flight since the days of Heathenism. But it was only because they walked in the light of revelation. They borrowed of the New Testament without acknowledgment, and took its beauties and its truths to deck their own wretched fancies and self-constituted systems. In the process of time the delusion multiplied and extended. Schools were formed, and the ways of the Divinity were as confidently theorized upon, as the processes of chemistry, or the economy of the heavens. Universities were endowed, and natural theology took its place in the circle of the sciences. Folios were written, and the respected luminaries of a former age poured their *à priori* and their *à posteriori* demonstrations on the world. Taste, and sentiment, and imagination, grew apace; and every raw untutored principle which poetry could clothe in prettiness, or over which the hand of genius could throw the graces of sensibility and elegance, was erected into a principle of the divine government, and made to preside over the counsels of the Deity. In the mean

time, the Bible, which ought to supersede all, was itself superseded. It was quite in vain to say that it was the only authentic record of an actual embassy which God had sent into the world. It was quite in vain to plead its testimonies, its miracles, and the unquestionable fulfilment of its prophecies. These mighty claims must lie over, and be suspended, till we have settled—what? the reasonableness of its doctrines. We must bring the theology of God's ambassador to the bar of our self-formed theology. The Bible, instead of being admitted as the directory of our faith upon its external evidences, must be tried upon the merits of the work itself; and if our verdict be favourable, it must be brought in, not as a help to our ignorance, but as a corollary to our demonstrations. But is this ever done? Yes! by Dr. Samuel Clarke, and a whole host of followers and admirers. Their first step in the process of theological study, is to furnish their minds with the principles of natural theology. Christianity, before its external proofs are looked at or listened to, must be brought under the tribunal of these principles. All the difficulties which attach to the reason of the thing, or the fitness of the doctrines must be formally discussed, and satisfactorily got over. A voice was heard from heaven, saying of Jesus Christ, "This is my beloved son, hear ye him!" The men of Galilee saw him ascend from the dead to the heaven

which he now occupies. The men of Galilee gave their testimony; and it is a testimony which stood the fiery trial of persecution in a former age, and of sophistry in this. And yet, instead of hearing Jesus Christ as disciples, they sit in authority over him as judges. Instead of forming their divinity after the Bible, they try the Bible by their antecedent divinity; and this book, with all its mighty train of evidences, must drivel in their antichambers, they have pronounced sentence of admission, when they have got its doctrines to agree with their own airy and unsubstantial speculations.

The Constellation. 12mo. 1815.

RICHARD BENTLEY, D.D.

Regius Professor of Divinity, and Master of Trinity College; a most eminent scholar and critic; was born at Dutton, near Wakefield, Yorkshire, in 1661—died in 1742, aged 81.

He (Middleton) comes now to a fourth argument for the absolute necessity of *free-thinking on religious questions*, and that is *from the infinite number of pretenders to revelation*; which he afterwards dully repeats under another head in the Bramins, Parsees, Bonzes, Talapoins, and Dervizes, to which he might have added several more. Now here is his perpetual juggle about his term of art *free-thinking*. Take it in the common sense, and we agree with him. Think *freely* on all the various pretences to revelation; compare the counterfeit *scriptures*

with the true, and see the lustre of the one, to which all the others serve as a foil. It was upon this very account that Christians took the pains to translate and publish them; not to confound religion, but to confirm it. And yet the occult meaning of our author is, from the variety of scriptures to insinuate none is true. An argument as weak as it is stale, and baffled over and over. Could this reason have any effect, Christianity had never begun. For besides the true *living oracles* of the Jews, was not the whole world false ones, written and divulged? and *oracular temples* (or *churches*, if he will,) then it being to deliver out more? Even *suppose* Christianity to be true, yet those impostures must necessarily be, while nature is what it is: and our Scriptures have foretold it. Is that, then, a good argument *backwards* against the truth of any thing, which *à priori* is plain must happen so, though that thing be *allowed* to be true?

Bentley's Works, edited by Rev. A. Dyce, Vol. 3. p. 331.

JOSEPH A. WARNE, A. M.

Pastor of the Baptist Church in Brookline, Massachusetts.

The religion of the Bible is not one which forbids those to whom it addresses itself, to examine its claims; it does not profess that they are not to be ascertained by the ordinary modes of investigating truth; but, on the contrary, it comes to us invested with just such evidences of

its truth as are seen to invest other truths of a similar nature ; *i. e.* other moral truths ; and the principal difference is in the *degree* of the evidence of Revealed Religion. This is incomparably greater than that which establishes any other moral truth whatever ; and we are justified in expecting that it should be so ; for Christianity comes to us professing to be not only *true*, but *divine* ; to be directly from God, and coming with such pretensions, it is reasonable that they should be sustained by a correspondent degree of evidence.

Gambier's Guide to the Study of Moral Evidence.
12mo. Boston, 1834. Editor's Preface, p. 50.

Christians, in all ages, to the end of the world, may, with the Scriptures in their hands, and with the evidence of their genuineness which we possess, adopt the language of the apostle to the Hebrews, as theirs, and say, that the gospel they hold was “confirmed to *us* by them who heard” the Lord Jesus himself : *i. e.* their faith rests on the unquestionable testimony of eye and ear witnesses, and not on “report” and far less on tradition.

Idem, p. 101.

The apostles in their labours to establish Christianity were open as daylight ; and appealed to a standard of truth, the authenticated copies of which were in the possession of their

enemies. They preached first to Jews; and, in all their addresses to them, appeal to the writings of their own prophets. They assume the certainty of this standard,—one which their opponents also admitted; and the openness, the frequency, the invariableness of this appeal (so entirely the reverse of an attempt to render the standard of truth uncertain, or to establish another standard) affords the most satisfactory internal evidence of their honesty, and of the truth of their doctrines.

Idem, p. 110.

We can scarcely too much admire the cool and unimpassioned manner in which the inspired writers record facts which are fundamental in the system of Christianity. In the poetry of the Sacred Volume there are some of the boldest flights of the muse anywhere to be met with; and in its narratives we cannot but admire the chasteness and elegance which guide the pen; but never do the inspired writers suffer themselves to work on the sensibilities of their readers, or make exhibitions of their own in their narratives. Even the record of the trial, condemnation, and crucifixion of Jesus is a mere record of the facts; and that in language which might have been transmitted to Rome, as the state record of the official doings of the Procurator. Neither do the sacred writers, utter a single invective, even against the traitor, Judas:

but make a simple record of his doings, and leave the deeds themselves to awaken indignation against him. *So safe* are we from being influenced, in our believe of Christianity, by flowers of rhetoric, instead of the force of truth.

Idem, p. 123.

The Sacred Scriptures possess, in a remarkable degree, this evidence of authenticity. Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel, and others of the Old Testament writers, committed their histories to writing among the people, and at, or immediately after the occurrence of the transactions related. So also the Evangelists wrote their histories in the very age when the events they record occurred; and two of them certainly, and all of them probably, were eye and ear witnesses of what they relate. Even the epistles contain internal evidence of being the works of the same age; as for example that to the Hebrews speaks of the mission and ministry of Jesus as having occurred in "*these last days*." Heb. i. 2. No time then had elapsed which could possibly give birth to doubt of the real occurrence of the events. Moreover, there is external evidence for the early existence of these books; for their existence even in the apostolic age. This evidence is derived from the writings of the apostolical fathers, who lived in the times of the apostles, and who often quote the Scriptures which we possess, as books

generally read and received by Christians. Now this could not have been done, while the apostles were yet living, unless they wrote the books which passed under their names; for they would have disclaimed them, and set the churches on their guard against them. But such not having been the case, it is morally certain that the apostles wrote the epistles which we receive; and thus the antiquity of these books being proved as great as the apostolic times, both their genuineness and authenticity are proved also.

Idem, p. 183.

If there be any exception to the moral certainty of the genuineness of the apostolical epistles, it exists in the case of the second and third epistles of John. And these have those claims to our belief which our author here mentions. They were letters to private persons, and not to those in official stations. Hence it is natural that they should be kept in the possession of their families long after the decease both of the writer, and of those to whom they were addressed; and their existence only known to those families; and, perhaps, not even to them. When first discovered, then, all the immediate vouchers for their genuineness were gone; and the church of Christ, (ever scrupulously careful not to admit into the Canon any but undoubtedly genuine writings of the apostles,) naturally hesitated to receive these, till they should be

thoroughly tested. But these epistles are not without very ancient testimony to their genuineness. Ireneus (A. D. 170), Clement of Alexandria (A. D. 180), Origen (A. D. 220), Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Jerome, Rufinus, and others quote and receive them; though even then, some few persons were still in doubt as to their genuineness. A still further examination, however, has removed all doubts; and, for many centuries, they have occupied their present place in the sacred canon. This scrupulous confidence in these epistles, for, as our author (Gambier) observes in the commencement of this special direction, "If they were disputed at first, but, on examination, were admitted, they are confirmed by their trial."

Idem, p. 184.

WILLIAM HAGUE, A. M.

Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Boston,
Massachusetts.

The application of the inductive system to the study of theology, is of all things else, in this age of religious controversy, "most devoutly to be wished." The great question which every man must settle at the outset is, Has the Bible a divine origin? He who examines this question with right feelings, will doubtless see upon the book the impress of God's signature. Then

let him "search the Scriptures" with the most perfect docility. Let him sit at Jehovah's feet and learn of Him. Let him study the great facts of revelation, and when he has classified them, he will have a system of theology, and all the system that any man needs. But let him receive his opinions first, and construct them, as he may think, into a scheme of perfect symmetry and then come to the Bible to seek evidence in its support, and probably he will find as much as he desires; he may strengthen and adorn it in every part, by detached passages which he calls "the true sayings of God;" and yet after all, he may find out at last, that though he had had much light, yet it was not that which "cometh from above;" that though he were wise indeed, yet that he had been "wise above that which was written;" and that the glow of beauty which his system possessed, was that which his own imagination had thrown around it, and not that imparted by the inspiration of the Spirit.

A Guide to the Study of Moral Evidence,
by Gambier. 12mo. Boston, 1834, p. 37.

The application of the principles of moral reasoning to the evidences of Christianity, is one of the noblest uses to which the science can be turned. No question can be more momentous than this, Is the Gospel of Christ a revelation from God? On such a subject, doubt must be painful; and in order to reach a correct decision,

it is necessary that the inquiring mind should, clearly, see what kind of evidence it is, which the case admits. An error on this point may be fatal. No one should expect mathematical demonstration. The argument is evidently “cumulative;” and when calmly surveyed in all its length and breadth and depth and height, will indeed appear to be a well-based and lofty structure, radiant in every part with the impress of God.

Idem, 40.

KING JAMES I. OF ENGLAND AND SIXTH OF SCOTLAND.

Son of Mary Queen of Scotland and Henry Lord Darnley—was born in Edinburgh Castle, June 1566—proclaimed King of England, 1603—died 1625.

If my conscience had not resolved me, that all my religion was grounded upon the plain words of the Scripture, I had never openly avowed it; for pleasure or awe of the *vaine pride of some sedicious preachours*.

Basilicon Doron. 1st edit. Edinburgh, 1599.

HANNAH MORE.

A very voluminous and popular writer; was born at Stapleton in Gloucestershire, 1744—died at Clifton, in the 88th year of her age.

Notwithstanding that all the truths of religion, all the doctrines of salvation, are contained in the holy Scriptures, these very Scriptures re-

quire the influence of that Spirit which dictated them to produce an influential faith. This Spirit, by enlightening the mind, converts the rational persuasion, brings the intellectual conviction of divine truth conveyed in the New Testament, into an operative principle. A man, from reading, examining, and inquiring, may attain to such a reasonable assurance of the truth of revelation as will remove all doubts from his own mind, and even enable him to refute the objections of others ; but this bare intellectual faith alone will not operate against his corrupt affections, will not cure his besetting sin, will not conquer his rebellious will, and may not therefore be an efficacious principle. A mere historical faith, the mere evidence of facts with the soundest reasonings and deductions from thence, may not be that faith which will fill him with all joy and peace in believing.

An habitual reference to that Spirit which animates the real Christian is so far from excluding, that it strengthens the truth of revelation, but never contradicts it. The word of God is always in unison with his Spirit. His Spirit is never in opposition to his Word. Indeed that this influence is not an imaginary thing, is confirmed by the whole tenor of Scripture. We are aware that we are treading upon dangerous ground, because disputed ground, for among the fashionable curtailments of Scripture doctrines, there is not one truth which has been lopped

from the modern creed with a more unsparing hand; not one, the defence of which excites more suspicion against its advocates. But if it had been a mere phantom, should we with such jealous iteration, have been cautioned against neglecting or opposing it? If the Holy Spirit could not be "grieved," might not be "quenched," were not likely to be "resisted;" that very Spirit which proclaimed the prohibitions would never have said "grieve not," "quench not," "resist not." The Bible never warns us against imaginary evil, nor courts us to imaginary good. If then we refuse to yield to its guidance, if we reject its directions, if we submit not to its gentle persuasions, for such they are, and not arbitrary compulsions, we shall never attain to that peace and liberty which are the privilege, the promised reward of sincere Christians.

Practical Piety. 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1811.

THE BIBLE.

Here the first history of mankind,
From its first origin we find;
God is its author, truth its name,
Salvation all its end and aim:
Here we are shown "the good old way,"
First to believe, and then obey.
God's Spirit dictates; men proclaim
The doctrines as from him they came.
And not by miracles alone,
By prophecy the truth is shown.

Tho' 'tis no scheme for dry dispute,
No scene to wrangle and confute ;
Not an arena for debate,
A field for harsh polemic hate ;
Yet strict enquiry may be mov'd,
The more 'tis search'd the more 'tis prov'd.
It is a boon by mercy given,
That man may gain some taste of heaven ;
Best medicine for the sin-sick soul,
For guilty passions best controul ;
To all, its precepts are applied,
The rich man's guard, the poor man's guide ;
To fill with gratitude the hearts
Where God his larger gifts imparts ;
To cheer with higher hopes the poor,
To teach the suff'rer to endure ;
The meek to raise, repress the bold,
To warn the young, to wean the old ;
The arms it lends are faith and prayer,
Its fruits, oblivion sweet of care.

Here are the only precepts given
For peace on earth, or rest in heaven.
Sole lesson since the world began,
For fear of God and love to man :
It came with blessings in its train,
Which to recount, the attempt were vain.
It came to hinder fell despair,
The ravages of sin repair ;
It came to cheer the contrite heart,
Redemption's wonders to impart ;

That he who sins should sin no more ;
It came—a lost world to restore.

Bible Rhimes. 8vo. Lond. 1821. Introduction.

SIR THOMAS ELYOT, KNIGHT.

In the reign of Henry VIII., a man of singular learning, of a knightly family in Suffolk ; he was a good Grammarian, Grecian, Poet, Philosopher, Physician, and what not to complete a Gentleman.

But nowe be we comen to the newe testamente and principally the bookes of the Evangelistes, vulgarely called the gospels, whiche be one contexte of an historie : do not they conteyne the temporall lyfe of our Saviour Christe, kyng of kynges and lorde of the worlde untill his glorious assencion ? And what thyng lacketh therein that dothe pertaine to a perfect historie ? There lacketh not in thinges, ordre and disposicion ; in the context of narracion, veritee ; in the sentences, gravitee ; utilitee in the counsailes ; in the persuasions doctrine ; in expositions or declaracions, facilitie.

The Book named the Governour.

Lond. 1546. Book 3, p. 205.

RICHARD DE BURY.

Bishop of Durham, 1333, and Son of Sir Richard Angarville, Knight ; was born at St. Edmundsbury—died 1345.

The Sacred Books most powerfully preserve and contain the truth ; they are assuredly the

written truth itself; for upon this occasion we do not assert the main beams of the books to be parts of books, wherefore riches are inferior to books, more especially as the most precious of all kinds of riches are friends (witness Boetius de Consolatione, B. 2), to which, however, the truth of books is preferred by Aristotle. But farther, as riches are primarily and principally acknowledged to pertain to the aid of the body only, and as the truth of books is the perfection of reason, which is properly named the good of mankind; so it appears that books to a man using them with reason are dearer than riches. Again, that by which the faith is most conveniently defended, most widely diffused, and most clearly preached, ought to be most beloved by a faithful man; and that is the truth of books, inscribed in books; which our Saviour most evidently figured when, manfully fighting against temptation, he covered himself with the shield of truth, not indeed of writing of any sort; but premising, that what he was about to declare by the sound of his living voice, was also written. .
Matt. iv.

Philobiblon, a treatise on the Love of Books, translated from the edition of 1473. 12mo. Lond. (Rodd), 1832, p. 14.

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from the modern creed with a more unsparing hand; not one, the defence of which excites more suspicion against its advocates. But if it had been a mere phantom, should we with such jealous iteration, have been cautioned against neglecting or opposing it? If the Holy Spirit could not be “grieved,” might not be “quenched,” were not likely to be “resisted;” that very Spirit which proclaimed the prohibitions would never have said “grieve not,” “quench not,” “resist not.” The Bible never warns us against imaginary evil, nor courts us to imaginary good. If then we refuse to yield to its guidance, if we reject its directions, if we submit not to its gentle persuasions, for such they are, and not arbitrary compulsions, we shall never attain to that peace and liberty which are the privilege, the promised reward of sincere Christians.

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But although we may see hogs despise pearls, the opinion of a prudent man is in no way injured by that; he will not the less purchase prof-

ferred pearls. The library, therefore, of wisdom is more precious than all riches, and nothing that can be wished for is worthy to be compared with it.

Idem, p. 16.

What else did this Sibylline prophetess teach the proud king by so subtle a device, but that the vases of wisdom, the Sacred Books, surpass all human estimation.

Idem, p. 19.

Then moved by pity we instantly run to meet the prodigal son, and snatch the fugitive servant from the gates of death ; the well known book is tendered to be read, and after a slight reading by the criminal, stammering from fear, the power of the judge is dissolved, the accuser is withdrawn, death is put to flight. O wonderful virtue of an empiric verse ! O salutary antidote to dire calamity ! O precious reading of the psalter, which deserves henceforth from this itself to be called the Book of Life ! Laymen must undergo secular punishment ; either being sown up in sacks they may be consigned to Neptune ; or planted in the ground may fructify for Pluto ; or may offer themselves up by fire, as fattened holocausts to Vulcan ; or at all events, being hanged they may be victims to Juno, while our pupil, by a single reading of the Book of Life,

is commended to the custody of the pontiff, and vigour is converted into favour.

Idem, p. 24.

The Holy Scriptures are not expounded, but exploded as trite sayings supposed to be already divulged in the streets and to all men, whose margins however very few have touched, whose profundity is even so great that it cannot be comprehended by human intellect, however vigilant it may be, at its utmost leisure and with the greatest study. He who constantly studies these, will be able to pick out the thousand maxims of moral discipline which they enforce with the most perfect novelty, refreshing the understandings of their hearers with the most soothing suavity, if he who founded the spirit of piety will only deign to open the door. For which reason the first professors of evangelical poverty, taking leave of every secular science whatever, gathering together the whole force of their minds, devoted themselves to the labours of these holy writings, meditating daily and nightly on the law of the Lord. Whatsoever they could steal from their famishing stomach or tear from their half-covered bodies, they applied to emending or editing books, esteeming them their greatest gain; their secular contemporaries, holding both their office and studies in respect, having conferred such books upon them as they had collected at great cost,

here and there in divers parts of the world, to the edification of the whole Church.

Truly in these days, when with all diligence you are intent upon lucre, it might be believed with probable presumption, according to anthropospathos (if the word may be allowed) or human feeling, that God entertains little anxiety about those whom he considers to distrust his promises, placing their hopes upon human foresight, neither considering the crow nor the lily which the Most High feeds and clothes. You ponder not upon Daniel, nor Abacuc the bearer of the dish of boiled pottage, nor remember Elijah fed by angels in the desert, again by crows at the brook, and, lastly, by the widow at Sarepta, relieved from the cravings of hunger by the divine bounty, which gives food to all flesh in due season. You are descending we fear, by a wretched ladder, while a reliance upon self-sufficiency produces distrust of divine piety, but reliance upon self-sufficiency begets solicitude about worldly affairs, and too much solicitude about worldly affairs takes away the love of books and study, and thus poverty now gives way through abuse, at the expense of the word of God, though you chose it only for its support. You draw boys into your religion with hooks of apples as the people commonly report, whom having professed, you do not instruct in doctrines by compulsion and fear as their age

requires, but maintain them to go upon beggarly excursions, and suffer them to consume the time in which they might learn, in catching at the favours of their friends, to the offence of their parents, the danger of the boys, and the detriment of the order. And thus without doubt it happens that unwilling boys, in no way compelled to learn, when grown up presume to teach, being altogether worthless and ignorant. A small error in the begining becomes a very great one in the end ; for thus also a certain and generally burthensome multitude of laymen grows up in your promiscuous flock, who however thrusts themselves into the office of preaching the more impudently, the less they understand what they talk about, in contempt of the Word of the Lord and to the ruin of souls. Verily you plough with the ox and the ass contrary to the law, when you commit the culture of the Lord's field to the learned and unlearned without distinction. It is written, Oxen plough, and asses feed by them ; because it is the business of the discreet to preach, but of the simple to feed themselves in silence by hearing sacred eloquence. How many stones do you throw upon the heap of Mercury in these days ? how many marriages do you procure for the eunuchs of wisdom ? how many blind speculators do you teach to go about upon the walls of the church ?

REV. JAMES EDWARD GAMBIER.

Rector of Langley, Kent.

Testimony, is either divine, or human. Divine testimony, when evidently such, produces perfect certainty. For, whatever God says, must be true. It, therefore, belongs to a higher species of evidence, than that which is the subject of this tract. But then, it must be ascertained, that, what is affirmed to be the word of God, is really God's word : and this inquiry must be conducted on the principles of moral evidence. On these principles, the authenticity of the Bible has often been investigated, and proved, with an accumulation of evidence, of which no other fact in the world ever admitted.

Guide to the Study of Moral Evidence, with notes by J. A. Warne, and Introductory Essay on Moral Reasoning by W. Hague. 12mo. Boston, 1834.

Thus, as the history of the Bible, though it records the peculiar privileges conferred on the Jews by the Almighty, yet as it relates also the base and ungrateful returns which they continually made for them, their universal reception of it renders its truth indubitable.

Idem, p. 182.

GEORGE FOX.

Founder of the Society of Quakers ; was born at Drayton in Leicestershire, 1622—died 1690.

He (Richard Baxter) says : Christ's Name is

called the Word of God; His Name is above every name, and over all things He must have the pre-eminence, words and names. Yet I say, the Scriptures of Truth, given forth from the Spirit of Truth, are the words of God; God's words, which Christ the Word fulfilled, by Him, in whom they end, who was before the words were spoken forth.

The Great Mystery, p. 110, 1659. (Evans.)

Concerning the Holy Scriptures: we believe they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who (as the Scripture itself declares, 2 Pet. ii. 21.) spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost: we believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled; (He that fulfils them is Christ;) and they are profitable for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, 2 Tim. iii. 19; and are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus. We believe the Holy Scriptures are the words of God, for it is said in Exodus xx. 1, "God spake all these words, saying," &c., meaning the ten commandments, given forth upon Mount Sinai. And in Rev. xxii. 18, saith John: "I testify to every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man addeth unto these, and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy," (not the Word,) &c.

So in Luke i. 20 ; Because thou believest not my words ; and in John v. 47 ; xv. 7 ; xiv. 23 ; xii. 47. So that we call the Holy Scriptures, as Christ, the apostles and holy men of God, called them, *viz.* the words of God.

Journal, pp. 145, 146, 147. 1671. (*Idem.*)

REV. DAVID SIMPSON, M.A.

Of Macclesfield, Cheshire.

Upon the supposition, that the person whom we call the SAVIOUR of the world, had no commission from heaven to make the will of God known to mankind, would it not be one of the greatest of miracles, that he and his twelve followers, poor, unlettered, and obscure men, should have brought to light a system of doctrines the most sublime, and of morals the most perfect ? that JESUS and the *fishermen of Galilee* should have far surpassed SOCRATES, PLATO, CICERO, and all the greatest men of the most enlightened period of the world ? that every thing they advanced should perfectly agree both with the natural, civil, and religious history of mankind ? that their discourses should still be capable of improving and delighting the most learned and profound geniuses of these latter ages ? that all modern discoveries should bear witness to the truth of the facts recorded in the *most venerable* of all *volumes* ? and that every book in the

world, sacred or profane, *Christian, Jewish, Pagan, or Mahometan*, instead of lessening, should establish the credit and authority of the Bible as a revelation from heaven !

A Plea for Religion and the Sacred Writings. 8vo. Lond. 1808, p. 209.

ROBERT HALDANE.

From the ages of Celsus and Porphyry, down to that of Voltaire and Thomas Paine, it may be safely affirmed there never has appeared one solitary unbeliever who has discovered by his writings, that he was thoroughly conversant with the nature or the evidences of that revelation which he undertook to overthrow. In most of the opponents of the Christian religion, the greatest ignorance is manifest. Their rejection of the Bible, far from being the result of a patient and full examination of its evidence, only displays a deep-rooted disaffection to its contents. They have evidently been urged to the acquirement of their slender acquaintance with the subject, not by the importance of the question, not by that love of truth of which they are ever boasting, but by the desire of discovering something weak at the foundation of Christianity. In this deplorable state of mind, it cannot be imagined that they would be assiduous in endeavouring fully to acquaint themselves even with those evidences which are most obvious. Far less can it be expected that they

should diligently search for such proof as requires more laborious investigation, or that they should retain a deep impression of the distinguishing features of those testimonies to which they have been actually introduced. They dislike the subject, and impatiently attend to it only so long as they hope to collect materials for cavil. When their unhallowed task is done, they usually take an abrupt departure, and for the most part bid a final farewell to that path, which, if pursued in a different spirit, might have conducted them to peace and happiness.

If this be the case with the philosophic unbeliever—if this be the procedure of the boasted friends of free enquiry, shall we be astonished to find the bulk of unbelievers totally ignorant of the evidences of Christianity? They reject the Bible, because they dislike it, and justify their dislike by objections, which the slightest acquaintance with the subject would have altogether precluded. These objections, a thousand times refuted, they advance, as unanswerable, with a confidence, which shows that they have never deemed it of any moment to consider or receive those satisfactory solutions which have been afforded by research.

In every other concern of human life, the folly and danger of such conduct would at once be manifest. Eager enquiry, in proportion to the magnitude and importance of the object, would be made without delay, and no pains

would be spared to obtain information. The most hidden sources of evidence would be carefully explored and the most recondite treasures unlocked. No avenue would remain untried, that gave the faintest promise of leading to knowledge. But in regard to the things of God, man's conduct is a mystery which revelation only can explain.

A book that presents itself as a messenger from heaven, furnished with ample credentials, cannot be safely overlooked or rejected without enquiry. True wisdom cannot refuse to hear it, and examine it with candour. If its claims be well founded, they are paramount to all other interests, and all earthly glory in the comparison loses its lustre. If the Bible be the word of God, its contents demand the utmost attention. This, however, is the only subject on which human curiosity does not relish information. The wise men of this world, as well as the ignorant, neglect the book of God, and while they boast the most intimate acquaintance with all the sages of Greece and Rome, they know little of Jesus Christ and the apostles.

How affecting it is to behold, upon the only question of infinite and eternal moment, so many make up their minds without any suitable enquiry, and madly stake their all against a body of evidence which they have never examined! Blinded by prejudice, and influenced by aversion to the truth, they impose on themselves, by the

most silly sophisms, the unsoundness of which, on all other subjects, they would instantly perceive. Men of the strongest intellectual powers are frequently duped by objections that would not stumble a child; some difficulty in the system of Christianity or the records of revelation, strikes their mind, which, without a thorough examination, appears of sufficient weight to excuse them from farther enquiry on a subject which they find disagreeable. Such conduct verifies the Scriptures, and affords additional evidence of their authenticity. It shows human nature to be what the Bible represents it, and stamps the character which it gives of man as a revelation from God.

But it is not only to avowed unbelievers that the charge of inadequate acquaintance with the evidences of revelation attaches, it is in a great measure applicable to the majority of the professors of Christianity. Of these not a few appear to take this matter altogether on trust. It seems quite enough for them that there are elaborate books of evidence, bearing on their title-page the names of those who have been distinguished for their learning and talents. Such conduct would be less irrational if the mere abstract truth of revelation were all that is to be considered, but it is perfect foolishness when viewed in the light of Scripture, which declares that its discoveries can be of no avail without personal faith. He that believes not the gospel

on its proper evidence, has no ground to look forward to the heavenly inheritance, though the truth itself stands unshaken by the sophistry of the sceptic.

Not only does it appear, however, that multitudes who make a profession of Christianity without experiencing its saving influence, are little aware of the importance of this subject, but many real Christians, these, too, far advanced in the knowledge of the divine word, are not sufficiently impressed with the sense of the duty and importance of studying the evidence of their holy religion. Convinced that it is true, they are often unmindful that there are degrees in our faith, and that our assurance of the truth of the Scriptures is confirmed by our acquaintance with their evidence. The more deeply and extensively we examine its proofs, the more fully do we perceive that the Bible could not be the work of man. In studying the evidences of the authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures, we are studying the Scriptures themselves; and while we advance in conviction, we advance in edification and Christian growth.

It seems, however, to be taken for granted, that books of evidence are principally valuable for convincing gainsayers of revelation, or for the establishment of babes in Christ. Christians of long standing and extensive knowledge of the divine word, it is thought, may regard this

subject as sufficiently ascertained, while they exclusively pursue the study of the doctrines and duties of Christianity. Now, it is humbly but earnestly suggested, that this is a very pernicious mistake. The study of the evidences of the book of God is intimately connected with progress in the knowledge of all the truth it contains. The subject is therefore highly important to believers themselves. For what purpose has God provided such irrefragable proofs of its divine origin, if it be not that they, as well as others, should use diligence to examine them? Though disquieted with no doubts, it is eminently calculated to afford them inexpressible consolation, as well as to confirm their minds and strengthen their faith, to view in their connexion the multiplied and various evidences of the truth of their religion.

The Evidence and Authority of Divine Revelation,
&c. 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1834. Introduction, iv. to ix.

The evidence of the authenticity and divine origin of the Scriptures is a subject of such inexhaustible and infinite importance, as at once to invite and to justify never-ending research. It is a subject intimately connected with the whole of the contents of the Inspired Book, which will be more or less fully developed in proportion as they are understood. By the weight of the proof, indeed, many have been convinced of the truth of revelation, who do not

understand its peculiar nature, and have never explored the recesses of its characteristic wisdom, which affords the most abundant and satisfactory evidence to those by whom it is perceived. They who have never discovered this divine impress of the Word of God, which he has deeply fixed in all his works of creation, of providence, and of redemption, may, upon the whole, entertain a strong conviction, that the Bible is his book; yet they will not only be ignorant of much of that evidence which otherwise they might possess, but will also look on some things as difficulties, both in regard to the internal and external evidences, which, if properly viewed, would serve as confirmations of its truth. The man, for instance, who is not thoroughly aware of the divine wisdom, and the unvarying plan of God, in allowing difficulties to appear in all his works, often finds himself stumbled, or at least at a loss to answer the objections of scepticism, even on the external evidence of revelation. When we consider any one source of that evidence, something of this description will present itself, and, if we look no further, fill us with embarrassment. We see that in all his works God reveals himself in such a manner as not to exclude the possibility of wilful perversion; and this is wisely appointed to manifest the enmity of the heart of man to the God of creation and providence, as well as to the God of redemption. Candid examination

will find a criterion to distinguish the hand of God ; and if men hate the truth, it is a just retribution of a righteous God to give them up to believe a lie. If this single observation is carried through every subject of our enquiries into the works and word of God, it will convert that which is to others a ground of stumbling into an additional source of evidence. It is a characteristic feature of all that is *divine*.

Idem. Introd. x. to xii.

The authenticity of the Scriptures is not to be viewed as that of the title-deeds of an estate, which, when once admitted and registered, need not afterwards be consulted. The Bible is valuable for the treasures it contains ; and while any thing in it is unknown, or imperfectly discovered, it must be a subject of study. Were we even fully acquainted with all its contents, the necessity of meditating on it would not cease. It is the food of the Christian, and by pondering its glorious truths he is nourished. The importance, then, of studying the truth of revelation, is seen in this, that the believer thereby advances in the knowledge of the things contained in the Bible, and his faith is continually strengthened by keeping its evidence before his mind. The same reason that renders the constant remembrance of the death and resurrection of the Saviour necessary to edification, comfort, and growth in grace, also

evinces the importance of keeping alive on the mind the evidence of those things that are reported in the Scriptures. The life of Methuselah would be well spent in the investigation of divine truth; and the constant discoveries made to faith exercised in humility and a teachable disposition, would repay a thousandfold in the riches of knowledge and grace. Independently, then, of any additional knowledge, this study is eminently useful to the Christian; but as to additional knowledge there is no boundary, the subject is inexhaustible in extent, and infinite in moment.

Idem. Introd. xiv. xv.

The internal evidences of the Scriptures are inexhaustible. They meet us in every page, and almost in every expression. Evidence here crowds on the mind from every quarter. It is impossible to select a fact or a circumstance that, to those who are accustomed to contrast the wisdom of God with the wisdom of man, may not afford some portion of evidence. The Scriptures are the word of God, and who can speak like God? He may be known by his speech as well as by his power.

Idem. Vol. 2, 458.

The Bible is the only book that gives a proper account of the God that made the world. While the most celebrated of all the philosophers faltered in the reception of this great

truth, shall they, who were accounted the foolish things of the world, by whom the Bible was written, reach the whole truth on this glorious subject? The Bible, then, which contains this account of the God of creation, is not the work of man, but is the work of God himself. Had it been the work of man it would have been like all human works; it might have glanced at the truth, but would have corrupted it with an admixture of falsehood.

Idem. Vol. 2, 459.

There is one characteristic in the Bible, which runs through all the variety of its communications, and is of so peculiar a nature as to manifest that the book in which it is so constantly found is not the work of man. This is the fact, that in no one of all the innumerable communications contained in Scripture, is there ever any regard paid to the gratification of mere curiosity. Facts and events are exhibited no farther than they bear on the point which appears to be in view; and in many instances we are left without satisfaction where our curiosity is most ardently awake. The information which commentators, in such cases, are so ready to supply, by probability or conjecture, proves that the original was not the composition of human wisdom. Had it been so, it would not have been deficient in any point interesting to curiosity. A book, then, that systematically refuses indul-

gence to one of the strongest principles in our nature, cannot be the work of man.

Idem. Vol. 2, 469.

In the account also which the Scriptures give of the state of man, we have internal evidence of their truth. That the earth is a scene of sin and misery is a fact constantly pressed on us by the most melancholy proofs ; but obvious as this truth is, it is not generally admitted in its proper extent, because all are naturally unwilling to acknowledge it. The Bible is the only book which gives an account of this sinful condition of man in its full extent, and ascribes it to an adequate cause. While all ages and nations have lived in guilt and misery, they have been unwilling to see either the one or the other of them in its whole extent, and untaught by the disappointment of all who have gone before, they are still dreaming of virtue and happiness. The Scriptures declare all men to be guilty ; and the conscience of every man, unless it is totally stupified, will give the same testimony. They at the same time manifest God in a character in which he can save the guilty, while he remains most perfectly just. The man then who rejects the Scriptures, has in himself sufficient means of ascertaining their truth. This is the ground on which it is condemnation for any man to reject the gospel. Millions are not able to examine the external evidence of the

Scriptures, but all men who hear the gospel have within themselves the means of knowing that it is true. The gospel is light.

Idem. Vol. 2, 462-3.

REV. GEORGE HERBERT.

An exemplary and eminent Divine ; younger brother of Lord Herbert ; was born in Wales, 1581—died 1648.

THE PARSON'S KNOWLEDGE.

The chief and top of his knowledge consists in the Book of Books, the storehouse, and magazine of life and comfort, the Holy Scriptures. There he sucks, and lives. In the Scriptures he finds four things ; precepts for life, doctrines for knowledge, examples for illustration, and promises for comfort : these he hath digested severally. But for the understanding of these ; the means he useth are first, a holy life, remembering what his master saith, that “ if any do God’s will he shall know of the doctrine,” John vii. and assuring himself, that wicked men, however learned, do not know the Scriptures, because they feel them not, and because they are not understood but with the same Spirit that writ them. The second means is prayer, which if it be necessary even in temporal things how much more in things of another world, where the well is deep, and we have nothing of ourselves to draw with ? Wherefore he ever begins the reading of the Scripture with some short inward ejaculation, as, *Lord, open mine*

eyes that I may see the wondrous things of thy law, &c. The third means is a diligent collation of Scripture with Scripture. For all truth being consonant to itself, and all being penned by one and the self-same Spirit, it cannot be but that an industrious, and judicious comparing of place with place, must be a singular help for the right understanding of the Scriptures. To this may be added the consideration of any text with the coherence thereof, touching what goes before, and what follows after, as also the scope of the Holy Ghost. When the apostles would have called down fire from heaven they were re-proved, as ignorant of what spirit they were. For the law required one thing and the gospel another; yet as diverse, not as repugnant: therefore the spirit of both is to be considered, and weighed. The fourth means are commentators and fathers, who have handled the places controverted, which the parson by no means refuseth. As he doth not so study others, as to neglect the grace of God in himself, and what the Holy Spirit teacheth him; so doth he assure himself, that God in all ages hath had his servants, to whom he hath revealed his truth, as well as to him; and that as one country does not bear all things, that there may be a commerce; so neither hath God opened, or will open all to one, that there may be a traffic in knowledge between the servants of God, for the planting both of love, and humility. Wherefore

he hath one comment at least upon every book of Scripture, and ploughing with this, and his own meditations, he enters into the secrets of God treasured in the Holy Scriptures.

Remains of that Sweet Singer of the Temple,
G. Herbert. Lond. (Pickering) 1838, p. 8, 9.

THE H. SCRIPTURES, I.

Oh Book! infinite sweetness! let my heart
Suck ev'ry letter, and a honey gain,
Precious for any grief in any part,
To clear the breast, to mollifie all pain.

Thou art all health, health thriving, till it make
A full eternity: Thou art a mass
Of strange delights, where we may wish and take.
Ladies, look here; this is the thankfull glass,

That mends the lookers eyes: This is the well
That washes what it shews. Who can endear
Thy praise too much? Thou art heav'ns leiger
here,

Working against the states of death and hell.

Thou art joyes handsel: Heav'n lies flat in thee,
Subject to every mounters bended knee.

II.

Oh that I knew how all thy lights combine,
And the configurations of their glory;
Seeing not only how each verse doth shine,
But all the constellations of the story.

This verse marks that, and both do make a motion

Unto a third, that ten leaves off doth lie :
Then, as dispersed herbs do watch a potion,
These three make up some Christians destinie.

Such are thy secrets, which my life makes good,

And comments on thee : For in ev'rything
Thy words do find me out, and parallels bring,
And in another make me understood.

Stars are poor books, and often times do miss :
This *Book of Stars* lights to eternal bliss.

The Temple, Sacred Poems, &c. The Church,
12mo. Reprint, Lond. (Pickering) 1838, p. 51.

WILLIAM PENN.

A celebrated Quaker, and founder of the Province of Pennsylvania ; was born in London, 1644—died 1718.

Nor would we be thought to lessen the virtue, use, and reputation of the Holy Scriptures, whilst we endeavour the vindication of the Holy Spirit, in his office of revelation to believers.

They are useful in two eminent respects :

First : Historically ; as giving us a true narrative of the transactions of those ages of the world, in reference to the church or state, of both Jews and Christians ; their trials, trou-

bles, temptations, lapses, recoveries and perfect victories.

Secondly—Doctrinally ; as presenting us with a true account of the principles and doctrines of the people of God ; their holy faith and patience : I cannot phrase it better than a divine glass, in which we see (I say, we see, who first have that heavenly organ, an eye opened by inspiration and revelation) the states and conditions of the primitive saints, which is matter of unspeakable comfort and confirmation, as well as of good example to us ; yet still, the efficient cause of all, is the convincing revelation, and operation of the Eternal Spirit of God ; and the Scriptures are only useful, as unfolded by the inspiration of the same.

Works, vol. ii. p. 37.

But I answer, did ever any Quaker in the world deny the Scriptures quoted ? Do they not own that the commandments should be kept for ever ; that Timothy did well to commit the wholesome doctrine he had heard of Paul, to others ; and that the faith should be contended for ; and the tradition, or those holy truths, declared by the apostle, should abide with them to whom he spoke ; and with us too, for evermore ? But what has this to do with the necessity of revelation ? Does not the same apostle expressly say, the Spirit of God only can give to discern the things of God ; and that if

any man is otherwise minded, God will reveal it to him ?

Idem, p. 42.

I do declare to the whole world, that we believe the Scriptures to contain a declaration of the mind and will of God, in and to those ages in which they were written ; being given forth by the Holy Ghost, moving in the hearts of holy men of God ; that they ought also to be read, believed, and fulfilled, in our day : being useful for reproof and instruction, that the man of God may be perfect.

Vol. ii. p. 324.

They are a declaration and testimony of heavenly things, but not the heavenly things themselves ; and as such, we carry an high respect unto them. We accept them as the words of God himself ; and by the assistance of his Spirit, they are read with great instruction and comfort, I esteem them the best of writings, and desire nothing more frequently, than that I may lead the life they exhort to ; and whatever slight apprehensions my disingenuous adversary is pleased to have of these kind of acknowledgments, I write the naked truth of my heart, knowing I must give an account to God.

Page 327.

This is the doctrine that is our crime, our enthu-

siasm, our error ; and we are seducers, deceivers, and what not, for asserting, recommending, and pressing it. But if this be to be vile, we are like to be more vile ; for we must bear witness to that which the Scripture testifies of, viz. the Spirit ; and prefer it before the Scripture, when the Scripture does so of itself. No man's letter is himself, nor so noble as himself. The Scripture is as the letter or epistle of the Holy Ghost to men ; but for that reason 'tis not the Holy Ghost, nor to be instead of the Holy Ghost to us ; nor, to be sure, to be preferred before the Holy Ghost. We bless God for the Scriptures ; we read them with comfort and advantage ; and they are profitable to the perfecting of the man of God, through the assistance of the Spirit. The Scriptures declare the things of God ; but cannot work them in the man : the Spirit only can do that ; for which cause we honour, exalt, and prefer the Spirit, as that which fulfils the Scripture ; and invite all to receive it, that it may make people spiritual ; for to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Wherefore, as often as any of our expressions are construed to lessen the Holy Scriptures, we ask it as a piece of justice from all our readers, to take this caution with them ; we speak comparatively, not with our books, or with men, but with Christ, his Light and Spirit, from whence the Scriptures came. And in this sense it is, that R. Barclay and others, on the like occasion, express them-

selves, when supposed to abate of the common opinion of the Scriptures. For as face answers face in a glass, so we say and know, the Spirit and Scripture answer each other. And, therefore, the comfortable evidence of a Christian man, is the testimony of the Spirit of God within him, and the Scriptures of truth without him. Let it not, then, be any more a fault in us to direct people to the Spirit of God, by which only they can come to the possession of the good things the Scriptures speak of; for though they exhort, rebuke, instruct, &c. yet without that great agent, the Spirit, influencing and enabling the creature, he shall never experience the truth of the Scriptures, to himself, in the most relative and excellent parts of it.

Page 799.

But for equalling our writings with Scripture, we have no such expressions or thoughts; it is a word of your own, and a conceit and inference of our old adversaries. There are degrees, as well as diversity of manifestations and operations, but the same Lord and the same Spirit: yet, if it will satisfy you, we have ever preferred the Bible to all books, and writings of saints and good men.

Idem, p. 800.

Concerning the Holy Scriptures. Because we assert the Holy Spirit to be the first, great, and general rule, and guide of true Christians,

as that by which God is worshipped, sin detected, conscience convicted, duty manifested, Scripture unfolded and explained, and consequently the rule for understanding the Scriptures themselves; (since by it they were at first given forth;) from hence our adversaries are pleased to make us blasphemers of the Holy Scriptures, undervaluing their authority, preferring our own books before them, with more to that purpose. Whereas, we in truth and sincerity believe them to be of divine authority; given by the inspiration of God, through holy men, they were speaking or writing them as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:—that they are declaration of those things most surely believed by the primitive Christians; and that, as they contain the mind and will of God, and are his commands to us, so they in that respect are his declaratory word; and therefore are obligatory on us, and are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, and thoroughly furnished to every good work.

Nay, after all, so unjust is the charge, and so remote from our belief concerning the Holy Scriptures, that we both love, honour, and prefer them before all books in the world; ever choosing to express our belief of the Christian faith and doctrine, in the terms thereof, and rejecting all principles or doctrines whatsoever, that are repugnant thereunto.

Nevertheless, we are well persuaded, that notwithstanding there is such an excellency in the Holy Scriptures, as we have above declared, yet the unstable and unlearned in Christ's school, too often wrest them to their own destruction. And upon our reflection on their carnal constructions of them, we are made undervaluers of Scripture itself. But certain it is, that as the Lord hath been pleased to give us the experience of the fulfilling of them in measure; so it is altogether contrary to our faith and practice to put any manner of slight or contempt upon them; much more, of being guilty of what maliciously is suggested against us; since no society of professed Christians in the world, can have a more reverent and honourable esteem for them than we have.

Idem, p. 878.

WILLIAM TYNDALE,

Or Tindale, otherwise Hychyns, one of the first Publishers of the Holy Scriptures in English; was born on the borders of Wales, 1500—martyred, 1536.

The Scripture is that wherewith God draweth us unto him. The Scriptures spring out of God and flow into Christ and were given to lead us to Christ. Thou must therefore go along by the Scripture as by a line untill thou come at Christ which is the way's end and resting place.

Works of Tyndall, Frith, and Barnes; edited by Rev. T. Russell. 3 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1831. The Obedience of a Christian Man. Vol. 1, p. 354.

PROLOGUE BY WILLIAM TYNDALE,
SHEWING THE USE OF THE SCRIPTURES, WHICH HE
WROTE BEFORE THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES.

Though a man had a precious jewel, and a rich, yet if he wist not the value thereof, nor wherefore it served, he were neither the better nor the richer of a straw. Even so though we read the Scripture, and babble of it never so much, yet if we know not the use of it, and wherefore it is given, and what is therein to be sought, it profiteth us nothing at all. It is not enough therefore, to read and talk of it only, but we must also desire God, day and night, instantly to open our eyes, and to make us understand and feel wherefore the Scripture was given, that we may apply the medicine of the Scripture, every man to his own sores ; unless then we intend to be idle disputers, and brawlers about vain words, ever gnawing upon the little bark without, and never attaining unto the sweet pith within ; and persecuting one another in defending of lewd imaginations, and phantasies of our own invention.

Idem. Vol. 1, p. 6.

A PATHWAY INTO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I do marvel greatly, dearly beloved in Christ, that ever any man should repugn or speak against the Scripture to be had in every language, and that of every man. For I thought that no man

had been so blind to ask why light should be shewed to them that walk in darkness, where they cannot but stumble, is the danger of eternal damnation ; other so despiteful that he would envy any man (I speak not his brother) so necessary a thing ; or so Bedlam mad to affirm that good is the natural cause of evil, and darkness to proceed out of light, and that lying should be grounded in truth and verity, and not rather clear contrary, that light destroyeth darkness, and verity reproveth all manner [of] lying.

Idem. Vol. 2. p. 490.

GEORGE REDFORD, D.D., LL.D.

Whether the Bible is true, and worthy of all acceptation, or whether it is a wicked fabrication, and a clumsy imposture, is a question not merely nor mainly speculative, but strictly and highly practical, involving the interests, the happiness, and the obligations of all. As we believe and feel upon this question, so will our conduct be affected for good or evil ; and in so far as the generations coming after us, in succession and dependance, must take their education, their institutions, their habits, and their religion, from us ; so far their condition, also, to an extent scarcely appreciable, will depend upon the opinions we may form upon this momentous subject.

Holy Scripture Verified. 8vo. Lond. 1837. Preface.

The Bible is a universal boon to mankind; and we who believe in its inspiration should do our utmost to give it extension and effect. It is not written for any particular nation or age. It does not depend for its authority or its vouchers upon any church or all churches. It stands upon its own peculiar evidences; and no more requires the endorsement of the church to make it current, than the sun requires the authority of the astronomers to warrant our belief in its existence, or our perception of its light and heat. The Bible belongs to the world, like the air, the ocean, the rivers, and the fountains of water. It is a common light, a common blessing, the imperishable heir-loom of humanity: our whole inheritance lies therein. No party can claim any special property in it; none has any right to monopolise it, or dogmatize upon its contents. It adequately vindicates its own claims, by the light and truth, and love which never forsake it. Happily it has long since achieved for itself an emancipation from the priestcraft which had restricted its circulation, and dictated its import to the world. It has since been gradually diffusing its light, and advancing towards that universal dissemination which its own prophecies foreshow as certain, and the auguries of these times indicate as near. Great and auspicious events to mankind seem to be travailing for their birth-hour. But whatever character they may give to the eras which

have yet to revolve, our own times have received their appropriate stamp; they can hardly miss the designation of the BIBLE AGE. Happy will it prove for ourselves, if we are found as diligent in studying the contents of THE BOOK, as we have been zealous in promoting its circulation.

Idem.

CHRISTOPHER HARVIE, M.A.

Son of a Minister in Cheshire, Butler of Brazen-Nose College, in 1613, aged sixteen years; Master of Arts, 1620; and became Vicar of Clifton in Warwickshire—died 1663.

THE BIBLE.

The Bible? That's the Book. The Book indeed,
The Book of Books :
On which who looks,
As he should do, aright, shall never need
Wish for a better light
To guide him in the night :

Or, when he hungry is, for better food
To feed upon,
Than this alone,
If he bring stomach and digestion good :
And if he be amiss,
This the best physick is.

The true Panchreston 'tis for ev'ry sore,
And sickness, which
The poor and rich,
With equal ease may come by. Yea, 'tis more
An antidote, as well
As remedy 'gainst Hell.

'Tis Heaven in perspective ; and the bliss
Of glory here,
If any where,
By saints on earth anticipated is,
Whilst faith to ev'ry word
A being doth afford.

It is the looking-glass of souls, wherein
All men may see,
Whether they be
Still, as by nature th' are, deform'd with sin ;
Or in a better case,
As new adorn'd with grace.

'Tis the great magazine of spiritual arms,
Wherein doth lye
Th' artillery
Of Heaven, ready charg'd against all harms,
That might come by the blows
Of our infernal foes.

God's cabinet of reveal'd counsel 'tis :
Where weal and woe
Are order'd so,
That every man may know which shall be his ;
Unless his own mistake
False application make.

It is the Index to Eternity ;
He cannot miss
Of endless bliss,
That takes this chart to steer his voyage by.
Nor can he be mistook,
That speaketh by this Book.

A Book, to which no Book can be compar'd
For excellence ;
Pre-eminence
Is proper to it, and cannot be shar'd ;
Divinity alone
Belongs to it, or none.

It is the Book of God. What if I should
Say, God of Books ?
Let him that looks
Angry at that expression, as too bold,
His thoughts in silence smother,
Till he find such another.

*The Synagogue at the end of Herbert's
Poems. Lond. (Pickering) 1838, p. 292.*

FRANCIS ATTERBURY, D.D.

Bishop of Rochester in the reigns of Anne and George I., was born at Milton or Middleton Keynes, Bucks, in 1662-3—died 1731-2.

Our chief business indeed, from such places as these, (the pulpit) is, to inculcate into the minds of *Christians*, the *practical* lessons of piety contained in the Gospel; to convince them of the reasonableness, beauty, and usefulness of those precepts, and to enflame them with ardent desires of excelling therein. However such speculative enquiries as these have also their use, and may sometimes deserve a place in your minds; as contributing to raise your attention in perusing the several parts of Holy Writ, and to improve and quicken you in your manner of meditating upon them; and as assisting you towards a discovery of those inestimable treasures of Divine Wisdom, which are hidden in the Sacred Volume. We generally I fear consult the Scriptures too negligently, and reflect on them too superficially, with no greater degree of attention and care, than we employ in perusing mere human composures, (and I would to God we employed always as much in one case as in the other!) We do not sufficiently consider, *who* it is that speaks to us there, nor *what* it is that he says; what weight, what fulness of sense, what excellent variety of matter, and wonderful depth of thought, there must be in words dic-

tated by, or at least spoken under the overruling influence of Infinite Wisdom. And therefore though the Scriptures are read every day in our churches, (and sometimes perhaps consulted in our closets,) yet we make but a slow proficiency towards a true taste, and a clear discernment of those high truths which are contained in them. We dwell on the letter only, on what offers itself to us at the first view; but we do not make ourselves acquainted with the life and spirit of them. And yet for this reason among others, these Holy Writings are left us by God, that we might, as good *David* speaks, *exercise ourselves in them day and night*, have perpetual matter for our enquiries into, and improvements in the knowledge of things divine, and drink always of these Waters of Life, without either allaying our thirst, or exhausting the spring from whence they flow.

The difference between the Holy Scriptures and other writings, is much the same as that between the works of art and nature. The works of art appear to most advantage at first, but will not bear a nice and repeated examination; the more curiously we pry into them, the less we shall admire them. But the works of nature will bear a thousand views, and reviews, and yet still be instructive and still wonderful. In like manner the writings of mere men, though never so excellent in their kind, yet strike and surprise us more upon our first perusal of them;

and then flatten upon our taste by degrees, as our familiarity with them increases. Whereas the word of Revelation is like its Author, of an endless and unsearchable perfection, and the more we look into it and revolve it in our minds, the more reason still shall we find to admire and adore the wisdom of the Great Revealer of it!

Sermons and Discourses, 4 vols. 8vo.

Lond. 1737. Vol. III., p. 53, 4, 5, 6.

GEORGE GORDON NOEL BYRON, LORD BYRON.

Was born in London, January 22, 1788—died at Missolonghi, in 1824.

I know the Scriptures sufficiently well to acknowledge, that if the mild and benignant Spirit of this religion were believed and acted on by all, there would be a wonderful change in this wicked world; and I have always made it a rule to respect every man who conscientiously believes the Scriptures whatever external creed he may profess, and most cordially do I detest hypocrites of all sorts, especially hypocrites in religion.

Conversation on Religion with Lord Byron
by Dr. Kennedy. 8vo. London. p. 150.

DANTE.

The first great Poet produced by Italy on the revival of Letters;
was born at Florence in 1265—died 1321.

Dante in his poeme of Paradise, written in Italian, complains that the pope of a shepherd

was become a wolfe, and diverted Christs sheepe out of the true way ; that the Gospell was forsaken, the writings of the fathers neglected, and the Decretals onely studied. That in times past warre was made upon the Church by the sword, but now by a famine and dearth of the Word, which was allotted for the food of the soule, and not wont to be denied to any that desired it, that men applauded themselves in their owne conceits, but the Gospell was silenced ; that the poore sheepe were fed with the puffed of winde, and were pined and consumed away.

Birckbek's Protestant's Evidence. 4to. Lond. 1635.

WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH, 1704.

A learned English Divine ; was born at Barrow in Leicestershire, 1638 ; Prebend of St. Pauls, 1674 ; Archdeacon of Colchester, 1681 ; Prebend of Canterbury, 1684—died 1707.

(After copiously reviewing the pagan idolatry, the Mahometan superstitions, and the Jewish ceremonies, he says,) Well, there is but one religion more generally professed in the world, that I am to search into ; which if upon good grounds, I cannot fix upon, I shall be the most miserable of all creatures ; and that is, the Christian religion, so named from Jesus Christ, whose doctrine, life and death, is recorded by four several persons, in a book which they call the Gospel. And this book appears to me to be of undoubted authority, as to the truth and cer-

tainty of those things that are therein recorded. For, if they had been false, both the persons that wrote them, and he of whom they wrote had so many malicious enemies ready, upon all occasions to accuse them, that they had long ago been condemned for lies and forgeries. But now, these writings have been extant for above 1600 years, and never so much as suspected, but even by the worst of enemies acknowledged to be a true relation of what passed in the world about that time; my reason will not permit me to be the first accuser, but enjoins me to receive them, under that notion, in which they have been brought down to me through so many generations, without any interruption whatsoever. For this general reception on all hands, is a sufficient ground for me to build my faith upon, as to the truth of the relation, though not a sufficient ground to believe every thing contained in the book, to be the word of God himself; for, in this particular, it is not the testimony of others that I am to build upon, but its own: I may read its verity in man's testimony, but its divinity only in its own doctrines.

This book, therefore, I have also diligently perused, and find it expressly asserts, that Jesus Christ whose life and death it records, was indeed that person, who was long promised by God, and expected by the Jews: and, that all the prophecies under the old law, concerning that

Messiah, God-man, were actually fulfilled in this person : which if upon diligent search, I can find to be true, I shall presently subscribe both with hand and heart to this religion. It is a comfort to me, that it acknowledgeth the Jewish law to be sent from God ; for truly, if it did not, my conscience would scarcely permit me to give any credit to it : being so fully convinced that that book is indeed of a higher extract than human invention, and of greater authority than human institution. And therefore it is that I cannot, I dare not believe, but that every particular prophecy contained in it, either is, or shall be, certainly fulfilled, according to every circumstance of time and place mentioned therein ; and by consequence, that this prophecy in particular, concerning the Messiah's coming, is already past ; the time wherein it was foretold he should come, being so long ago expired. So that I do not now doubt whether the Messiah be come or no, but whether this Jesus Christ, whom this book of the Gospel speaks of, was indeed the person. And this I shall best find out by comparing the Christian's Gospel with the Jewish law ; or the histories of Christ under the one, with the prophecies of the Messiah, under the other ; still concluding, that if whatsoever was foretold concerning the Messiah, was fulfilled in this Jesus Christ, then he was indeed the Messiah, that was come into the world. And, to make this comparison the more exact, I shall

run through the several circumstances that attended his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, and show how punctually the prophecies were fulfilled in every particular. (Here follows numerous citations from the Old and New Testaments, illustrative of the Bishop's arguments.)

Thus the gospel seems to me to be a perfect transcript of the law, and the histories of Jesus nothing else but the prophecies of Christ turned into a history. And, when to this I join the consideration of the piety of the life which this man led, the purity of the doctrine which he taught, and the miraculousness of the works he wrought, I cannot but be farther confirmed in the truth of what is here related. For the miracles which he wrought, as the "healing of the sick with a word of his mouth, raising the dead, feeding so many thousands with five loaves," and the like, were powerful and convincing, that his very enemies, that would not believe him to be the Messiah, could scarcely deny him to be a God. Joseph. Antiq. 1, xviii. c. 4. And it is to this day, a tenet amongst some of them that the miracles which Jesus did, were not the delusions and jugglements of the devil, but real miracles wrought as they say, by the virtue of the name of God, *Jehovah*, which he had gotten out of the temple. By which, it is plain, they acknowledged God to be the author of them, which I cannot see how he should be, unless

they were agreeable to his will, and for the glory of his name.

Neither was the doctrine of the Gospel only established at the first, but likewise propagated by miracles afterwards, as it was necessary it should be, for, if it had been propagated without miracles, itself had been the greatest miracle of all. It was, no doubt, a great miracle, that a doctrine so much contrary to flesh and blood, should be propagated by any means whatsoever ; but a far greater, that it should be propagated by a company of simple and illiterate men, who had neither power to force, nor eloquence to persuade men to the embracing of it. For who would have thought that such persons as these were, should ever make any of the Jews, who expected a king for their Messiah, to advance them to temporal dignities, or believe, that that Jesus whom themselves scourged and crucified at Jerusalem was the person? or, that they should be able to propagate the Gospel amongst the Gentiles also, who neither believed in the true God, nor expected anything of a Messiah to come and redeem them? But this they did, and brought over not only many persons, but whole nations and countries to the profession of the gospel ; propagating this most holy doctrine among the most barbarous and sinful people in the world, maugre all the opposition that the world, the flesh, and the devil, could make against it. Now can any man, that ex-

erciseth his reason think they did all this purely by their own strength? No, sure, none of these wonderful effects could ever have been produced by any thing less than the wisdom and power, and faithfulness of their Lord and Master, whose service they were engaged in, and who promised to be with them to the end of the world; Mat. xxviii. 20. Questionless, it was nothing else but the Spirit of the most High God, that went along with them, and accompanied the word they preached; otherwise it never could have made such deep impression upon the hearts of them that heard it, as not only to command their attention, but to hinder them from resisting, when they strove and endeavoured to do it, the power and authority by which the disciples spake.

And now, methinks, I begin to perceive this divine spirit is come upon me too, and seems, by its powerful influence, to be working up my heart into a thorough persuasion, that it is Christ, and Christ alone, I am to cast my soul upon; that it is he alone, that is the way to life, and his word alone, the word of life, which “whosoever believes, and is baptised into, shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned.” Away, then, with your pagan idolatries, your Mahomethan superstitions, and Jewish ceremonies, it is the Christian religion, alone, that I am resolved to live and die in, because it is this alone, in which I am taught to worship God aright, to obtain the pardon and remission

of my sins, and to be made eternally happy. And, since all its doctrines and precepts are contained in the Holy Scriptures, it is necessary that I shall assent unto them, as a standing revelation of God's will and an eternal treasure of divine knowledge; whereby all, that sincerely believe in Christ, may be sufficiently instructed, as well as thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work.

Without any more ado, therefore, I believe, and am verily persuaded, that all the books of the ancient law with all those that have been received into the canon of the Scripture by the Church of God, since the coming of Christ, which we call the New Testament; I say, that all these books, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the Revelations, are indeed the word of the eternal God, dictated by his own Spirit, unto such as himself was pleased to employ in the writing of them; and that they contain in them a perfect and complete rule of faith and manners; upon the due observance of which, I cannot fail of worshipping and serving God, in such a manner, as will be acceptable to him here, and of enjoying hereafter "those exceeding great and precious promises," that he has reserved in heaven, for such as do so.

Unto these books, therefore of the law and gospel I am resolved by his grace that wrote them, to conform all the ensuing articles of my faith, and all the actions and resolutions of my

life. Insomuch that whatsoever I find it hath pleased his Sacred Majesty herein to insert, I believe it is my duty to believe, and whatsoever he hath been pleased to command me, I believe it is my duty to perform.

Private Thoughts upon Religion, Article II.

REV. E. PAYSON.

If any imagine that he has estimated too highly the historical information which this volume contains, we would only request them to peruse it with attention; and particularly to consider the assistance which it affords in accounting for many, otherwise inexplicable, phenomena in the natural and moral world. A person who has never attended to this subject, will, on recollection, be surprised to find for how large a portion of his knowledge he is indebted to this neglected book. It is the only book which satisfactorily accounts, or even professes to account, for the introduction of natural and moral evil into the world, and for the consequent present situation of mankind.

The Bible above all Price; a Discourse before the Bible Society at Maine. Lond. (Wertheim) 1836, p. 7.*

It is the Bible alone, which by informing us of the deluge, enables us to account satisfactorily for many surprising appearances in the internal

* The compiler hopes he has not extracted so much as to injure the sale of this excellent little work, which is published at the small price of two-pence.

structure of the earth, as well as for the existence of marine exuviae on the summits of mountains, and in other places far distant from the sea.

By the same volume we are assisted in accounting for the multiplication of languages which exist in the world—for the degraded condition of the Africans—for the origin and universal prevalence of sacrifices—and for many other facts of an equally interesting nature. We shall only add that while the Scriptures throw light on the facts here alluded to, the existence of the facts powerfully tends, on the other hand, to establish the truth and authenticity of the Scriptures.

In addition to these intrinsic excellencies of the Bible, which give it, considered merely as a human composition, powerful claims upon the attention of persons of taste and learning, there are various circumstances of an adventitious nature which render it peculiarly interesting to a reflecting mind. Among those circumstances, we may, perhaps, not improperly mention its great antiquity; whatever may be said of its inspiration, some of the books which compose it are unquestionably the most ancient literary compositions extant, and perhaps the most ancient that ever were written. Nor is it very improbable, that letters were first employed in recording some parts of them, and that they were written in the language first spoken by man. It is also not only the most ancient

book, but the most ancient monument of human exertion, the oldest offspring of human intellect now in existence. Unlike the other works of man, it inherits not his frailty. All the contemporaries of its infancy have long since perished, and are forgotten; but this volume, this wonderful volume, still survives. Like the fabled pillars of Seth, which are said to have bid defiance to the deluge, it has stood for ages, unmoved in the midst of that flood which sweeps away men with their labours into oblivion.

Idem, p. 8, 9.

The interest which this volume excites by its antiquity, will be greatly increased, if we consider the violent and persevering opposition it has encountered, and the almost innumerable enemies it has resisted and overcome. We contemplate with no ordinary degree of interest, a rock which has braved for centuries the ocean's rage, practically saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

Idem, p. 10.

For thousands of years this volume has withstood, not only the iron tooth of time, which devours men and their works together, but all the physical and intellectual strength of man. Pretended friends have endeavoured to corrupt and betray it: kings and princes have perseve-

ringly sought to banish it from the world; the civil and military powers of the greatest empires of the world have been leagued for its destruction; the fires of persecution have been lighted to consume it and its friends together; and at many seasons, death in its most horrid form has been the almost certain consequence of affording it an asylum from the fury of its enemies.

It has been also almost incessantly assailed by weapons of a far different kind, which to any other book would be more dangerous than either fire or sword. In these assaults, wit and ridicule have wasted all their shafts; misguided reason has been compelled, though reluctantly, to lend her aid; and after defeats innumerable, has been again dragged to the field. The arsenals of learning have been emptied to arm her for the contest; and in search of means to prosecute it with success, recourse has been had not only to remote ages and distant lands, but even to the bowels of the earth, and the regions of the stars; yet still the object of these attacks remains uninjured, while one army after another of its assailants has melted away.

Though it has been ridiculed more bitterly, misrepresented more grossly, opposed more rancorously, and burnt more frequently, than any other book, and perhaps than all other books united, it is so far from sinking under the efforts of its enemies, that the probability of its surviving until the final consummation of all things, is

now evidently much greater than ever. The rain has descended; the floods have come; the storm has arisen, and beaten upon it; but it falls not, for it is founded upon a rock. Like the burning bush, it has ever been in the flames, yet still it is unconsumed; a sufficient proof, were there no other, that HE who dwelt in the bush preserves the Bible.

Idem, p. 11, 12.

In this volume we see the chosen companion, the most intimate friend of the prophets, the apostles, the martyrs, and their pious contemporaries; the guide, whose direction they implicitly followed; the monitor, to whose faithful warnings and instructions they ascribe their wisdom, their virtues, and their happiness. In this volume we see the book, in which the deliverer, the king, the sweet psalmist of Israel, delighted to meditate day and night; whose counsels made him wiser than all his teachers, and which he describes as sweeter than honey, and more precious than gold.

This too is the book for which our pious ancestors forsook their native land, and came to this then desolate wilderness, bringing it with them, as their most valuable treasure, and at their death bequeathing it to us, as the richest bequest in their power to make.

From this source, they, and millions now in Heaven, derived the strongest and most invali-

able consolation; and scarcely can we fix our eyes upon a single passage in this wonderful book, which has not afforded comfort or instruction to thousands, and been met with tears of penitential sorrow or grateful joy, drawn from eyes that will weep no more. Thousands have sealed their belief of its truth with their blood; rejoicing to shed it in defence of a book, which, while it led them to the stake, enabled them to triumph over its tortures.

Nor have its efforts been confined to individuals; nations have participated largely in its benefits. Armed with this volume, which is at once sword and shield, the first heralds of Christianity went forth, conquering and to conquer.

Idem, p. 13. 14.

Wherever its influence is felt, temperance, industry, and contentment prevail; natural and moral evils are banished or mitigated; and churches, hospitals, and asylums for almost every species of wretchedness, arise to adorn the landscape, and cheer the eye of benevolence. Such are the temporal benefits, which even infidelity itself, if it would, for once, be candid, must acknowledge that the Bible had conferred on man.

Wherever it comes, blessings follow in its train. Almost coeval with the sun, its fittest emblem, it has, like that luminary, from the

commencement of its existence, shed an unceasing flood of light on a benighted, wretched world. Who, then, can doubt that HE who formed the sun, gave the Bible to be “a light unto our feet, and a lamp to our path?” Who that contemplates this fountain, still full and overflowing, notwithstanding the millions that have drank of its waters, can doubt that it has a real, though invisible connexion with that river of life, which flows for ever at the right hand of God?

Thus far we have considered the Bible as merely a human composition; though, as was unavoidable, some rays of divinity have, from time to time, burst through the cloud in which we vainly attempted to shroud it. But, if it be in this light, thus valuable and interesting, in what language shall we describe the importance it assumes, when viewed as a revelation from God; as the book which has guided millions of immortal beings to Heaven; as the book which must guide us there, if we ever reach those mansions of eternal day!

Idem, p. 15, 16.

The ancient Greeks had one sentence, which they believed, though without foundation, to have descended from Heaven; and to evince their gratitude and veneration for this gift, they caused it to be engraved in letters of gold, on the front of their most sacred and magnificent

temple. We, more favoured, have not one sentence only, but a volume, which really descended from Heaven; and which, whether we consider its contents or its Author, ought to be indelibly impressed on the heart of every child of Adam. Its author is the author of our being; and its contents afford us information of the most satisfactory and important nature, on subjects of infinite consequence, respecting which, all other books are silent, or speak only doubtfully and unsatisfactorily. It informs us, with the greatest clearness and precision, of every thing necessary either to our present or future happiness; of every thing, in fact, the knowledge of which its author knows would be really useful to us; and thus confers those benefits which the tempter falsely asserted would result from eating the forbidden fruit, making us as gods knowing good and evil.

In the fabulous records of pagan antiquity we read of a mirror endowed with properties so rare, that by looking into it, its possessor could discover any object which he wished to see, however remote; and discover with equal ease, persons and things, above, below, behind, and before him. Such a mirror, but infinitely more valuable than this fictitious glass, do we possess in the Bible; by employing it in a proper manner we may discern objects and events, past, present, and to come. Here we may contemplate the all-enfolding circle of the Eternal

Mind ; and behold a perfect portrait of Him whom no mortal eye hath seen, drawn by his own unerring hand.

Idem, p. 17, 18.

Equally important to the present and future happiness of man, are the precepts which the Scriptures inculcate. With the greatest clearness and precision, and with an authority to which no other book can pretend, they teach us our duty.

Idem, p. 22.

By opening this volume, we may at any time walk in the garden of Eden with Adam ; sit in the ark with Noah ; share the hospitality, or witness the faith of Abraham ; ascend the mount of God with Moses ; unite in the secret devotions of David ; or listen to the eloquent and impassioned address of Paul. Nay more—we may here converse with Him who spake as never man spake ; participate with the spirits of the just made perfect, in the employments and happiness of heaven ; and enjoy sweet communion with the Father of our spirits, through his Son Jesus Christ. Such is the society to which the Scriptures introduce us ; such the examples which they present to our imitation ; requiring us “to follow them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises ;” to walk in the steps of our divine Redeemer, and to be “followers of God as dear children.”

Nor does this precious volume contain nothing but instructions, precepts and threatenings—No! it contains also “strong consolations,” consolations suited to every possible variety and complication of human wretchedness; and of sufficient efficacy, to render the soul not only resigned, but joyful, in the lowest depths of adversity; not only tranquil, but triumphant, in the very jaws of death. It is the appointed vehicle by which the Spirit of God, the promised Comforter, communicates not only his instructions, but his consolations to the soul. It is, if I may so express it, the body which he has assumed; in order to converse with men, and he lives and speaks in every line. Hence it is said to be “quick,” or living, and “powerful.” Hence its words are “spirit,” and they are “life,” the living, life-giving words of the living God. The consolation which it imparts, and the blessings which it offers, are such as nothing but omnipotent goodness can bestow. It finds us guilty, and freely offers us pardon; it finds us polluted with innumerable defilements, and offers us moral purity; it finds us weak and enslaved, and offers liberty; it finds us wretched, and offers happiness; it finds us dead, and offers everlasting life; it finds us “having no hope, and without God in the world,” with nothing before us but a “certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation,” and places glory and honour and immortality full in view; .

and while it urges us to pursue them by the exercise of faith in the Redeemer, and “patient continuance in well doing,” it encourages and animates us in the pursuit, by the most condescending offers of assistance, and by “exceeding great and precious promises,” promises signed by the immutable God, and sealed by the blood of his eternal Son—promises which one would think are sufficient to render indolence active, and timidity bold. Unfailing pleasures, durable riches, immortal honours, imperishable mansions, an unfading crown, an immoveable throne, an everlasting kingdom, an eternal weight of glory—perfect, uninterrupted, never-ending, perpetually increasing felicity, in the full fruition of God—are the rewards which these promises assure to all penitent believers.

But in vain do we attempt to describe these rewards, for “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

Such are the circumstances which render the Bible interesting as a human composition ; such the instructions, precepts and promises, which it communicates, as a revelation from God.

In proportion also to the importance of its contents are the evils which would result from its absence or loss. Destroy this volume, as the enemies of human happiness have vainly endeavoured to do, and you render us profoundly

ignorant of our Creator, of the formation of the world which we inhabit, of the origin and progenitors of our race, of our present day and future destination, and consign us through life to the dominion of fancy, doubt and conjecture.

Destroy this volume, and you rob us of the consolatory expectation, excited by its predictions, that the stormy cloud which has so long hung over a suffering world, will at length be scattered, and a brighter day succeed. You forbid us to hope that the hour is approaching, when nation shall no more lift up sword against nation, and righteousness, peace and holy joy, shall universally prevail—and allow us to anticipate nothing but a constant succession of wars, revolutions, crimes, and miseries, terminating only with the end of time.

Destroy this volume, and you deprive us of religion, with all the animating consolations, hopes and prospects which it affords; and leave us nothing but the liberty of choosing (miserable alternative!) between the cheerless gloom of infidelity and the monstrous shadows of paganism.

Destroy this volume, and you unpeople heaven; bar for ever its doors against the wretched posterity of Adam; restore to the king of terrors his fatal sting; bury hope in the same grave which receives our bodies; consign all who have died before us to eternal sleep, or endless misery; and allow us to expect nothing at death but a similar fate.

In a word—destroy this volume, and you take from us at once every thing which prevents existence from becoming of all curses the greatest: you blot out the sun, dry up the ocean, and take away the atmosphere of the moral world; and degrade man to a situation from which he may look up with envy to that of “the brutes that perish.”

Who, then, would not earnestly wish to believe the Scriptures, even though they came to him unattended with sufficient evidence of their divine origin? Who can be so much his own enemy, as to refuse to believe them, when they come attended with evidence more than sufficient to satisfy all but the wilfully incredulous? Who, in this view of them, (which is a most imperfect one,) is prepared to say, that they are not of all books the most important? That they ought not to be prized and studied, as such, by all who possess them, and put without delay into the hands of all who do not?

Idem, p. 24—29.

ROBERT BARCLAY,

OF URY.

A celebrated apologist for the Quakers, and one of the ablest writers of that sect; was born in Scotland, 1648—died 1690.

PROPOSITION THIRD, CONCERNING THE SCRIPTURES.

From these revelations of the Spirit of God

to the saints, have proceeded the Scriptures of truth, which contain :

I. A faithful historical account of the actings of God's people in divers ages ; with many singular and remarkable providences attending them.

II. A prophetical account of several things, whereof some are already past, and some yet to come.

III. A full and ample account of all the chief principles of the doctrine of Christ, held forth in divers precious declarations, exhortations, and sentences ; which, by the moving of God's Spirit, were, at several times, and upon sundry occasions, spoken and written unto some churches and their pastors.

Nevertheless, because they are only a declaration of the Fountain, and not the Fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate, primary rule of faith and manners. Yet because they give a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from which they have all their excellency and certainty : for as by the inward testimony of the Spirit we do alone truly know them, so they testify that the Spirit is that guide, by which the saints are led into all truth ; therefore, according to the Scriptures, the Spirit is the first and principal leader. Seeing then that we do therefore receive and believe the

Scriptures, because they proceeded from the Spirit; for the very same reason, is the Spirit more originally and principally the rule, according to the received maxim in the schools, *Propter quod unumquodque est tale, illud ipsum est magis tale*: that for which a thing is such, the thing itself is more such.

Apology, 8vo.

First, The former part of this proposition, though it needs no apology for itself, yet it is a good apology for us, and will help to sweep away that, among many other calumnies, wherewith we are often loaded, as if we were vilifiers and deniers of the Scriptures; for in that which we affirm of them, it doth appear at what high rate we value them, accounting them, without all deceit or equivocation, the most excellent writings in the world; to which not only no other writings are to be preferred, but even in divers respects not comparable thereto. For as we freely acknowledge, that their authority doth not depend upon the approbation or canons of any church or assembly; so neither can we subject them to the fallen, corrupt, and defiled reason of man; and therein, as we do freely agree with the Protestants, against the error of the Romanists; so on the other hand, we cannot go the length of such Protestants, as make their authority to depend upon any virtue or power that is in the writings themselves; but

we desire to ascribe all to that Spirit from which they proceeded.

Idem.

If the Scripture be not the adequate, principal, and only rule, then it would follow that the Scripture is not complete, nor the canon filled: that if men be now immediately led and ruled by the Spirit, they may add new Scriptures of equal authority with the old; whereas every one that adds is cursed: yea, what assurance have we, but, at this rate, every one may bring in a new gospel, according to his fancy?

Idem.

In this respect above-mentioned then, we have shown what service and use the Holy Scriptures, as managed in and by the Spirit, are of to the church of God; wherefore, we do account them a secondary rule. Moreover, because they are commonly acknowledged by all, to have been written by the dictates of the Holy Spirit; and that the errors, which may be supposed by the injury of times to have slipped in, are not such but that there is a sufficient clear testimony left, to all the essentials of the Christian faith, we do look upon them as the only fit outward judge of controversies among Christians; and that, whatsoever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony, may therefore justly be rejected as false. And for our parts we are very willing that all our doctrines and

practices be tried by them ; which we never refused, nor ever shall, in all controversies with our adversaries, as the judge and test. We shall also be very willing to admit it as a positive, certain maxim, “that whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil.” For as we never lay claim to the Spirit’s leadings, that we may cover ourselves in any thing that is evil ; so we know that as every evil contradicts the Scriptures, so it doth also the Spirit, in the first place, from which the Scriptures came, and whose motions can never contradict one another ; though they may appear sometimes to be contradictory to the blind eye of the natural man, as Paul and James seem to contradict one another.

Idem.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

He expressed a wish that I should read to him, and when I asked from what book, he said : “*Need you ask ? there is but one.*” I chose the 14th chapter of St. John’s Gospel.

Lockhart’s Life of Scott. 8vo.
Edinb. 1838. Vol. vii. p. 387.

Within that awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries ;
Happiest they of human race,
To whom their God has given grace

To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, to force the way ;
And better had they ne'er been born,
Than read to doubt, or read to scorn.

The Monastery, vol. ii. ch. 1.

EDMUND BURKE.

A very distinguished statesman and political writer, a native of Ireland ; was born 1730—died 1797.

The Scripture alone can supply ideas answerable to the majesty of this subject. In the Scripture, wherever God is represented as appearing or speaking, every thing terrible in nature is called up to heighten the awe and solemnity of the divine presence. The psalms and the prophetical books are crowded with instances of this kind. “The earth shook (says the psalmist) the heavens also dropped at the presence of the Lord.” And what is most remarkable, the painting preserves the same character, not only when he is supposed descending to take vengeance upon the wicked, but even when he exerts the like plenitude of power in acts of beneficence to mankind. “Tremble, thou earth! at the presence of the Lord; at the presence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters!”

Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. Part ii. sect. 5. On Power.

ISAAC PENINGTON.

A writer of considerable estimation among the Quakers ; born about 1617—died 1679.

We do indeed really, heartily, singly, as in God's sight, own the Scriptures ; the Scriptures written by the prophets and holy men of God under the law ; the Scriptures written by the evangelists and apostles in the time of the Gospel ; and we read them with delight and joy, and would draw no man from a right reading of them, to the benefit of his soul ; but only from giving their own judgements on them without the Spirit of God : lest in so doing, they wrest them to their own destruction.

This is that which the Lord hath drawn us from, and which we know it would also be profitable to others to be drawn from too ; to wit, from imagining, and guessing at the meaning of Scriptures, and interpreting them without the opening of that Spirit from which they were given forth ; for they who do so, feed that part (with a gathered knowledge) which should be famished, die, and perish, that another thing might come to live in them, and they in it.

A Visit of Tender and Upright Love, &c. 1668. Vol. iii. p. 184.

Yet though we do own Christ to be the rule, we do not deny making use of the Scriptures, to try doctrines and forms of religion by ; but know, that what is of God, doth and will agree therewith, and what doth not agree therewith,

is not of God ; and that our forefathers in the faith, were led to batter the superstitions and idolatries of the Papists, by the 'testimony of the Scriptures.

Vol. iv. p. 208. 1667.

REV. RICHARD HODGSON, M.A.

Fourth Master of King's College School, and Assistant Minister of South Lambeth Chapel.

The writers in defence of Christianity have generally grounded their arguments upon what are termed, its *external* and *internal* evidences.

By the latter is understood that testimony to its divine original derivable from its own intrinsic excellence ; a proof, which a deeper insight into its revealed mysteries strengthens and confirms, so that to an established Christian, the *internal proof* comes home with a demonstration more powerful and convincing than that which any *external evidence* can produce. The sublimity of its doctrines,—the purity of its morals,—the preciousness of its promises,—the justice of its denunciations, — and its evident tendency to glorify God and promote the happiness of man, the light which it throws upon a future state, and upon the way which leads to life eternal,—establish irresistibly the proof that it came forth from God, and is that word, which “holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

But this evidence will naturally be resisted

by those who are prejudiced against the truths of revelation, and who, therefore, demand other evidences before they will bow to an allegiance so entire as that which the Sacred Record demands, and with nothing short of which God will be satisfied. "We will have," say they, "more clear and positive proofs that it is of such high origin, before we admit the credibility of a system, which demands every thought to be brought into captivity to the obedience of its Divine Author."

To such we submit the evidences deducible from miracle and prophecy, which are termed the *external* evidences.

By that of miracle, we mean, briefly, the proof that Jesus is the Christ, gathered from the mighty works which he did, and to which he directed the attention of his unbelieving countrymen in proof of his divine mission. When asked by the disciples of St. John, whether he were the Christ, he said, "Go and show John again those things, which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them."

Correctly speaking, indeed, miracles were not of *themselves* sufficient to prove his Messiahship, but required to be viewed in connexion with prophecy, which foretold that the Messiah should do that which Jesus did.

Hence the evidence from miracle is mixed up with that from prophecy, which certainly is the great foundation whereon the truth of the Gospel rests.

To this evidence Jesus himself repeatedly alludes, invariably referring to the Scriptures as receiving in *him* their accomplishment ; as he says in St. John—"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life ; and they are they which testify of me." A like course was pursued by the first preachers of the Gospel, as we read of St. Paul, that, "as his manner was, he went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead ; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ."—Acts xvii. 2, 3.

"It is written," or the accordance of Old Testament prophecy relating to our Lord Jesus Christ, with its fulfilment in the New Testament. 12mo. Lond. 1836.

FAUSTUS SOCINUS.

Commonly esteemed the founder of the sect of Socinians ; was born at Sienna, 1539—died in Poland, 1604.

AN ARGUMENT FOR THE AUTHORITY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Many even among those who profess the name of Jesus Christ, doubt the truth of the Christian religion, and the authority of the Holy Scriptures, that is, the books call'd the Bible, or the Old and New Testament ; and ask,

why we are to believe those things to be true, and rightly transmitted, that are contain'd therein, and propos'd to us, as objects of faith, thinking no sound argument can be produc'd to make this evident.

This question may be divided into two heads. For, either those who thus doubt, and make this query, otherwise allow the religion of Jesus of Nazareth who is called Christ, to be true, or do not allow it; but either distrust the certain truth of it, or doubt not in the least that it is utterly false. We will speak first to the former of these heads, and then to the latter, that the whole matter may be the more fully and distinctly explain'd.

First, I say, then, if the religion of Jesus of Nazareth, who is call'd Christ, be allow'd to be true, I cannot see how the authority of the books call'd the Old and New Testament, can reasonably be question'd. As to the Old Testament, since that is apparently confirm'd by the New, if the divine authority of the latter shall be clearly demonstrated (that being granted which has been now said of the religion of Jesus Christ, *i. e.*, its being true) it will follow from thence undeniably, the Old Testament must be adjudged to have the same authority; especially where it appears not, or there can be no well grounded suspicion the Old Testament has undergone any corruption or alteration, as will be more amply shewn in its place.

Now, that it is very unreasonable to doubt the authority of the New Testament (as if either the history or doctrine of the Christian religion were not faithfully deliver'd therein) may be made evident, if I am not mistaken, in the following manner, whereby all causes of doubt, which may perhaps arise in the mind of any Christian, commonly so call'd, will be effectually remov'd, and made void.

An Argument for the Authority of the Holy Scriptures; translated from the Latin by E. Combe. 8vo. Lond. 1731.

There seem to be four principal reasons for suspecting the authority of any book whatsoever. The first is, if the writer be of little or no credit, or such, whose fidelity and science may be question'd. Another, if the true writer or the book be unknown. A third, if it be otherwise made appear, or there be any just suspicion the book hath been corrupted, or in any respect alter'd or depriv'd. But a fourth and last is, if there be testimonies of men worthy of faith, and therefore not to be rejected, that no regard is to be given to that book. If then it shall be demonstrated, that neither of these four objections can lye against the book call'd the New Testament: it will certainly be likewise manifest, its divine truth or authority, cannot, unless wrongfully and injuriously, be question'd.

Idem, p. 4.

As to the first cause of doubt, *viz.*, if the

writer be of little or no credit, or such whose fidelity and knowledge cannot be question'd, the matter stands thus. To render the writer of any book unworthy of much regard, or such, whose integrity and capacity is not to be rely'd on, chiefly comes from hence; either it must be made evident, or there must be some good reason for suspicion, that he did not rightly know what he writ, or did not write what he knew to be true: or there must plainly appear some clear indications of these in the book it self; I mean, either of the ignorance or imposture of the writer. Now, in the first place, I would know, how it can be made out, or fairly suspected (unless from what may be collected out of the books themselves) that the writers of the New Testament were not perfectly acquainted with what they relate, or would not write things as they knew them to be, that they did amiss through ignorance or imposture. Of this I can see no proof.

For either we will admit the writers of these books to be the same, whose names they respectively bear, or quite other men; if other, let their names be first produc'd, together with sufficient evidence that they writ those books, and not those to whom they have been by universal consent ascrib'd: then we shall see whether they were such to whom faith is due, or not. For if any one shall alledge, it is enough, if nothing appears to evince, they were the writers

of this book, who are commonly reputed so to be; I answer, this has nothing to do with the first of the four causes before-mention'd, that can deservedly render the authority of any book dubious, of which cause we now speak; it belongs to the second, to be consider'd in its proper place; but is of no validity to prove any thing in this part of our disputation; unless it be only to except, if any one perhaps shall argue from the writers of the New Testament themselves, to prove the authority of that book; which indeed is not done here, where only an answer is return'd to what may be urg'd against their authority, to the intent that the same being made void, the authority of the book may fall with it.

But to return to our purpose; if no sufficient proofs can be found (as certainly there can be none) to demonstrate, that others wrote that book, and not they to whom it is vulgarly ascrib'd it undeniably follows, since it is taken for granted in this place, that 'tis well known who the authors of the New Testament were (for how can it be made manifest otherwise, or any just suspicion, at least, be rais'd; but only from what may be collected out of the books themselves, that either those writers were ignorant of, or did not with fidelity enough deliver the things therein contain'd, unless it be certain who the writers were?) it follows, they were really those who are taken so to be: if the

same, let us consider their qualifications, and the nature of what they wrote ; that we may see, first, whether there be any manner of likelihood they were ignorant of the truth of that they publish'd ; and secondly, whether there be any ground to suspect they committed to writing, what they knew to be notoriously false, or at least contrary to truth, as to the several pen-men of the New Testament, and their writings.

Idem, p. 7, et seq.

ANONYMOUS.

Here is the spring where waters flowe
To quench our heate of sinne ;
Here is the tree where truth doth grow,
To leade our lives therein.

Here is the Judge that stints the strife,
Where men's devises faile ;
Here is the bread that feedes the life,
That death cannot assaile.

The tidings of salvation deare
Come to our eares from hence ;
The fortresse of our faith is here,
And shield of our defence.

Then be not like the hogge, that hath
A pearle at his desire,
And takes more pleasure at the trough,
And wallowing in the myre.

Reade not this Book, in any case
 But with a single eye ;
 Reade not, but first desire God's grace
 To understand thereby.

Pray still in faith, with this respect,
 To fructify therein ;
 That knowledge may bring this effect
 To mortify thy sinne.

Then happie thou in all thy life,
 What so to thee befallles ;
 Yea doubly happy shalt thou be,
 When God by death thee calls.

The above Verses appear in nearly all the Geneva Editions of the Translation of the Bible, which was made during the reign of Queen Mary, by the illustrious exiles John Knox, Miles Coverdale, and others.

THOMAS WILSON,

Bishop of Sodor and Man ; was born at Burton in Cheshire,
 in 1663—died 1755.

HOLY SCRIPTURES.

He that reads them, with a purpose to profit by them, will find them clear, and his duty determined.

Read them with humility, not to appear more knowing, but to edify.

The Holy Scriptures teach us how, by repentance and faith, we may recover God's favour here, and be happy hereafter for ever.

They that preach the Gospel, so as to accom-

moderate it to the maxims of the world, the interests of this life, and the inclination of nature, have forgot that Christ's "kingdom is not of this world," nor designed to promote its grandeur.

A man that reads the Scriptures, as he does other books, for diversion, for improvement in worldly knowledge, &c. only, and not with a design to order his life according to the rules and examples of piety he finds there, will never by all his reading become "wise unto salvation."

The reading of Scripture, when serious, is ever attended with a blessing: for instance the Ethiopian eunuch.

(The) Holy Scriptures (are) obscure, that we may apply ourselves to study them; and that we may have recourse to the Holy Spirit, by which they were written, for the understanding of them.

He that is of a teachable temper will submit to the rules of the Gospel in their plain and obvious sense; and he that will not do so will run into endless errors, even as much as if the Gospel had never been preached.

If we would not fall into endless errors or mistakes touching the designs of the will of God, we must receive the Gospel in the plainness and simplicity thereof; without wire-drawing it, to bring it to our own sentiments and desires.

A Christian life is the great key of the Gospel.

A man may know all the learned criticisms of

the Scriptures, without knowing the spirit, the piety, and the mysteries thereof.

By the Holy Scriptures every man may see what he is, what he is not, and what he ought to be. Let us, therefore, meditate upon them, consult them as our rule, and make them evermore our pattern.

Read the Scriptures, but read them with attention ;—read the parables of the prodigal, of the rich man, of him that built new barns, &c. Read these, and see if nothing in them belongs to you ; whether you are not “faring sumptuously every day,” while others want bread ; whether you are not laying out too much upon fine clothes, while others want clothes to keep them warm, &c.

The Holy Scriptures are an adorable mixture of clearness and obscurity, which enlighten and humble the children of God, and blind and harden those of this world. The light proceeds from God, and blindness from the creature.

Maxims of Piety and of Christianity. 12mo.

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.

The patriarchs knew, as well as we, that faith and repentance was the only way to please God ; they had faith in the promise of the Messiah, they confessed their sins, &c. and in their prayers there was nothing concealed but the name of Christ, which they expressed by the tender mercies, the loving kindness of the

Lord, &c. In short both churches had the same Mediator, the same Spirit, as well as the same God ; and for this reason, we use the same psalms and the same prayers as they did, because dictated by the same Spirit. As far as they embraced the great promise, so far they embraced Christ. Thus Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. This is of great moment to be understood, in order to understand the Bible. And we only add the *Gloria Patri*, &c. to the *Psalms of David*, to make them *Christian Hymns*.

Idem.

WHY ARE THE SCRIPTURES SOMETIMES DARK ?

Why ; to put us in mind, that the knowledge of God, and of the mysteries of Christianity, are favours which are to be asked of God, if ever we hope to understand them.

Idem.

TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL.

Few people deny them !—most live as if they were not true.

The Gospel affords us infallible rules of life ; and, provided we apply them right, we cannot be wrong in our judgement.

Idem.

GOSPEL NOT RECEIVED.

How should they, whose hearts are set upon the riches, pleasures, honours, and all the idols of this world, love a gospel which condemns all these, and recommends mortification, self-denial, &c.

Idem.

WILLIAM PALEY, D.D.

Archdeacon of Carlisle, a very celebrated English Writer ; was born at Peterborough in July 1743—died May 25, 1805.

OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Not forgetting, therefore, what credit is due to the evangelical history, supposing even any one of the four gospels to be genuine ; what credit is due to the gospels, even supposing nothing to be known concerning them but that they were written by early disciples of the religion, and received with deference by early Christian churches ; more especially not forgetting what credit is due to the New Testament in its capacity of *cumulative* evidence ; we now proceed to state the proper and distinct proofs, which shew not only the general value of these records, but their specific authority, and the high probability there is that they actually came from persons whose names they bear.

There are, however, a few preliminary reflections by which we may draw up with more regularity to the propositions upon which the close

and particular discussion of the subject depends. Of which nature are the following.

I. We are able to produce a great number of ancient *manuscripts*, found in many different countries, and in countries widely distant from each other, all of them anterior to the art of printing, some certainly seven or eight hundred years old, and some which have been preserved probably above a thousand years. (The Alexandrian manuscript, now in the British Museum was written probably in the fourth or fifth century.) We have also many ancient *versions* of these books, and some of them into languages which are not at present, nor for many ages have been, spoken in any part of the world. The existence of these manuscripts and versions prove that the Scriptures were not the production of any modern contrivance. It does away also the uncertainty which hangs over such publications as the works, real or pretended, of Ossian and Rowley, in which the editors are challenged to produce their manuscripts, and to shew where they obtained their copies. The number of manuscripts, far exceeding those of any other book, and their wide dispersion, afford an argument, in some measure to the senses, that the Scriptures anciently, in like manner as at this day, were more read and sought after than any other books, and that also in many different countries. The greatest part of spurious Christian writings are utterly lost; the rest preserved

by some single manuscript. There is weight also in Dr. Bentley's observation, that the New Testament has suffered less injury by the errors of transcribers, than the works of any profane author of the same size and antiquity; that is, there never was any writing in the preservation and purity of which the world was so interested or so careful.

II. An argument of great weight with those who are judges of the proofs upon which it is founded, and capable, through their testimony, of being addressed to every understanding, is that which arises from the style and language of the New Testament. It is just such a language as might be expected from the apostles, from persons of their age and in their situation, and from no other persons. It is the style neither of classic authors, nor of the ancient Christian fathers, but Greek coming from men of Hebrew origin; abounding, that is, with Hebraic and Syriac idioms, such as would naturally be found in the writings of men who used a language spoken indeed where they lived, but not the common dialect of the country. This happy peculiarity is a strong proof of the genuineness of these writings: for who should forge them? The Christian fathers were for the most part totally ignorant of Hebrew, and therefore were not likely to insert Hebraisms and Syriasms into their writings. The few who had a knowledge of the Hebrew, as Justin Martyr, Origen, and

Epiphanius, wrote in a language which bears no resemblance to that of the New Testament. The Nazarenes, who understood Hebrew, used chiefly, perhaps almost entirely, the Gospel of Saint Matthew, and therefore cannot be suspected of forging the rest of the sacred writings. The argument, at any rate, proves the antiquity of these books; that they belonged to the age of the apostles; that they could be composed indeed in no other.

III. Why should we question the genuineness of these books? Is it for that they contain accounts of supernatural events? I apprehend that this, at the bottom, is the real, though secret, cause of our hesitation about them; for, had the writings inscribed with the names of Matthew and John, related nothing but ordinary history, there would have been no more doubt whether these writings were theirs, than there is concerning the acknowledged works of Josephus or Philo: that is, there would have been no doubt at all. Now it ought to be considered that this reason, however it may apply to the credit which is given to a writer's judgment or veracity, affects the question of genuineness very indirectly. The works of Bede exhibit many wonderful relations: but who, for that reason, doubts that they were written by Bede? The same of a multitude of other authors. To which may be added, that we ask no more for our books than what we allow to other books

in some sort similar to ours: we do not deny the genuineness of the Koran; we admit that the history of Apollonius Tyanaeus, purporting to be written by Philostratus, was really written by Philostratus.

IV. If it had been an easy thing in the early times of the institution to have forged Christian writings, and to have obtained currency and reception to the forgeries, we should have had many appearing in the name of Christ himself. No writings would have been received with so much avidity and respect as these: consequently none afforded so great temptation to forgery. Yet have we heard but of one attempt of this sort, deserving of the smallest notice, *that* in a piece of a very few lines, and so far from succeeding, I mean, from obtaining acceptance and reputation, or an acceptance and reputation in any wise similar to that which can be proved to have attended the books of the New Testament, that it is not so much as mentioned by any writer of the first three centuries. The learned reader need not be informed that I mean the epistle of Christ to Abgarus, king of Edessa, found at present in the work of Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 15, as a piece acknowledged by him, though not without considerable doubt whether the whole passage be not an interpolation, as it is most certain, that, after the publication of Eusebius's work this epistle was universally rejected.

V. If the ascription of the gospels to their

respective authors had been arbitrary or conjectural, they would have been ascribed to more eminent men. This observation holds concerning the first three Gospels, the reputed authors of which were enabled, by their situation, to obtain true intelligence, and were likely to deliver an honest account of what they knew, but were persons not distinguished in the history by extraordinary marks of notice or commendation. Of the apostles, I hardly know any one of whom less is said than of Matthew, or of whom the little that is said, is less calculated to magnify his character. Of Mark nothing is said in the Gospels; and what is said of any person of that name in the Acts, and in the Epistles, in no part bestows praise or eminence upon him. The name of Luke is mentioned only in St. Paul's Epistles, and very transiently. The judgement, therefore, which assigned these writings to these authors proceeded, it may be presumed, upon proper knowledge and evidence, and not upon a voluntary choice of names.

VI. Christian writers and Christian churches appear to have soon arrived at a very general agreement upon the subject, and that without the interposition of any public authority. When the diversity of opinion, which prevailed, and prevails among Christians in other points, is considered, their concurrence in the canon of Scripture is remarkable, and of great weight, especially as it seems to have been the result of

private and free inquiry. We have no knowledge of any interference of authority in the question, before the council of Laodicea in the year 363. Probably the decree of this council rather declared than regulated the public judgement, or more properly speaking, the judgement of some neighbouring churches; the council itself consisting of no more than thirty or forty bishops of Lydia and the adjoining countries. Nor does its authority seem to have extended farther; for we find numerous Christian writers, after this time, discussing the question, "what books were entitled to be received as Scripture," with great freedom, upon proper grounds of evidence, and without any reference to the decision of Laodicea.

These considerations are not to be neglected: but of an argument concerning the genuineness of ancient writings, the substance, undoubtedly, and strength, is ancient testimony.

This testimony it is necessary to exhibit somewhat in detail: for when Christian advocates merely tell us, that we have the same reason for believing the gospels to be written by the evangelists whose names they bear, as we have for believing the Commentaries to be Cæsar's, the *Æneid* Virgil's, or the Orations Cicero's, they content themselves with an imperfect representation. They state nothing more than what is true, but they do not state the truth correctly. In the number, variety, and early date, of our

testimonies, we far exceed all other ancient books. For one, which the most celebrated work of the most celebrated Greek or Roman writer can allege, we produce many. But then it is more requisite in our books, than in theirs, to separate and distinguish them from spurious competitors. The result, I am convinced, will be satisfactory to every fair inquirer: but this circumstance renders an inquiry necessary.

In a work, however, like the present, there is a difficulty in finding a place for evidence of this kind. To pursue the details of proofs throughout, would be to transcribe a great part of Dr. Lardner's eleven octavo volumes: to leave the argument without proofs, is to leave it without effect, for the persuasion produced by this species of evidence depends upon a view and induction of the particulars which compose it.

The method which I propose to myself is, first, to place before the reader, in one view, the propositions which comprise the several heads of our testimony, and afterward to repeat the same propositions in so many distinct sections, with the necessary authorities subjoined to each.

The following, then, are the allegations upon the subject, which are capable of being established by proof:—

I. That the historical books of the New Testament, meaning thereby the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, are quoted, or alluded to, by a series of Christian writers, beginning

with those who were contemporary with the apostles, or who immediately followed them, and proceeding in close and regular succession from their time to the present.

II. That when they are quoted, or alluded to, they are quoted or alluded to with peculiar respect, as books *sui generis*; as possessing an authority which belonged to no other books, and as conclusive in all questions and controversies amongst Christians.

III. That they were, in very early times, collected into a distinct volume.

IV. That they were distinguished by appropriate names and titles of respect.

V. That they were publicly read and expounded in the religious assemblies of the early Christians.

VI. That commentaries were written upon them, harmonies formed out of them, different copies carefully collated, and versions of them made into different languages.

VII. That they were received by Christians of different sects, by many heretics as well as catholics, and usually appealed to by both sides in the controversies which arose in those days.

VIII. That the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen Epistles of Saint Paul, the first Epistle of John, and the first of Peter, were received, without doubt, by those who doubted concerning the other books which are included in our present canon.

IX. That the Gospels were attacked by the early adversaries of Christianity, as books containing the accounts upon which the religion was founded.

X. That formal catalogues of authentic Scriptures were published; in all which our present sacred histories were included.

XI. That these propositions cannot be affirmed of any other books claiming to be books of Scripture; by which are meant those books which are commonly called apocryphal books of the New Testament.

The Evidences of Christianity.

MICHAEL BRUCE.

A Poet of the last century; was born at Kinnasswood, in Scotland, 1746—died 1767.

During his last illness, it is said,—“he occupied himself in committing portions of Scripture to memory, which he would repeat and comment upon to the friends who visited him.” After his death, it is added, “his Bible was found upon his pillow, marked down at Jeremiah xxii. 10; and on the blank leaf this verse was written:—

’Tis very vain for me to boast
How small a price my Bible cost;
The day of judgment will make clear
’Twas very cheap, or very dear.”

Mackelvie’s Life of Bruce, prefixed to his Poems.

• CHARLES BUTLER.

An eminent Barrister of Lincoln's Inn ; born in Pall Mall, 15th August, 1750—died 2d June, 1832.

Thus we (the R. Catholics) have not been idle in the great and noble project of the propagation of the Sacred Volume : and whoever sees in Le Long's *Bibliotheca Sacra*, the numberless editions of the whole Bible, or of the New Testament, which have issued from the Roman Catholic presses abroad, will be cautious in imputing to us, any *backwardness* in that salutary work.

MS. Letter to Mr. W. Blair upon the projected Catholic Society for the Distribution of the Bible.

MONSIEUR CLAUDE.

An eminent French Protestant clergyman ; was born in the province of Angenois, in 1619—died 1687.

Monsieur Claude was a very considerable man among the protestants who were driven out of France by Lewis the Fourteenth. When he was taken ill he sent for the senior pastor of the church, to whom in the presence of all his family he expressed himself thus : “ Sir, I was desirous to see you, and to make my dying declaration before you. I am a miserable sinner before God. I most heartily beseech him to shew me mercy for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope he will hear my prayer. He

has promised to hear the cries of repenting sinners. I adore him for blessing my ministry. It has not been fruitless in his church ; it is an effect of God's grace, and I adore his providence for it."

After pausing awhile, he added, "I have carefully examined all religions. None appear to me worthy of the wisdom of God, and capable of leading man to happiness, but the Christian religion. I have diligently studied Popery and the Reformation. The protestant religion, I think, is the only good religion. It is all found in the Holy Scriptures, the word of God. From this, as from a fountain, all religions must be drawn. Scripture is the root, the protestant religion is the trunk and branches of the tree. It becomes you all to become steady to it.

Simpson's Plea for Religion.

DR. LEECHMAN, D.D.

A learned Scotch divine, and Professor of Theology, afterwards Principal of the University of Glasgow ; was born at Delphinstone, in Lanarkshire, 1706—died 1785.

At the close of his life, thus addressed the son of a worthy nobleman, who was designed for the church, and the early part of whose education had been under the doctor's eye.

"You see the situation I am in : I have not many days to live ; I am glad you have had an opportunity of witnessing the tranquillity of my last moments. But it is not tranquillity and

composure alone; it is joy and triumph; it is complete exultation." His features kindled, his voice rose as he spake. "And whence," says he, "does this exultation spring? From that book (pointing to a Bible that lay on a table), from that book, too much neglected indeed, but which contains invaluable treasures! treasures of joy and rejoicing! for it makes us certain that this mortal shall put on immortality."

Simpson's Plea for Religion.

BERNARD GILPIN.

An eminent and useful divine called the Apostle of the North; was born in Westmoreland, 1517—died 1583.

The Holy Scriptures ought to hold sovereign place and prehemineny above all the writings of all men.

Life of Bernard Gilpin, by Bp. Carleton. 12mo. Lond. 1636.

GEORGE VILLIERS,

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

A distinguished character in the reign of Charles II.; was born in London, 1628—died 1688.

Your men of wit, my dear doctor, generally look upon themselves as discharged from the duties of religion, and confine the doctrines of the Gospel to people of meaner understandings: it is a sort of derogation in their opinion to comply with the rules of Christianity, and they reckon that man possessed of a narrow genius,

who studies to be good. What a pity that the Holy Writings are not made the criterion of true judgement ! or that any one should pass for a fine gentleman in this world, but he that seems solicitous about his happiness in the next. My dear doctor, I am forsaken by all my acquaintance, utterly neglected by the friends of my bosom, and the dependents of my bounty ; but no matter—I am not now fit to converse with the first, and have no ability to serve the latter. Let me not be cast off wholly, however, by the good ; favour me with a visit, dear doctor, as soon as possible. Writing to you gives me some ease, especially upon a subject I could talk of for ever. I am of opinion, this is the last visit I shall solicit from you—my distemper is powerful ; come and pray for the departing spirit of the unhappy

BUCKINGHAM.

Extract of a Letter to Dr. W.—Literary Magazine, vol. iii. 1789, p. 360.

JOHN WICKLIFFE.

A very learned English divine in the fourteenth century ; was born near Richmond, in Yorkshire, 1324—died about 1384.

Christs law sufficeth by it selfe to rule Christs church ; that a Christian man well understanding it, may thence gather sufficient knowledge during his pilgrimage here on earth.

De Verit. Scrip. p. 15, lib. de 7. peccat. mortal. p. 40. (Birckbek, vol. 2, p. 86.)

Neither friers nor prelates may define any thing in matters of faith, unlesse they have authority of sacred Scripture.

Waldens Doctrinal Fidei, lib. 2, cap. 19, tom. 1. (*Birckbek*, vol. 2, p. 121.)

CHARLES TAYLOR, ENGRAVER.

Born at Shenfield, Essex, 1756—died Nov. 13, 1823.

It is universally acknowledged in all Christian countries, and by all Christian persons, that a just understanding of the Bible, which is the foundation of Christianity, is a most desirable acquisition; it is an acquisition, in pursuit of which, numbers of learned men in all ages, since it has been given to mankind, have cheerfully passed their lives, and engaged their learning; and numbers in all countries throughout Christendom are constantly employed in the present day, no less than former ages were, in illustrating and enforcing the doctrines and the precepts of this important volume. But this volume is important, not to men of learning only, or principally to those whose professional pursuits lead them to more intimate acquaintance with it,—it is of equal consequence to the unlearned, as to the learned; to the simple as to the wise. The duties it enjoins, the doctrines it delivers, are of universal concern; no one is so exalted in rank or station, as to be above a knowledge of the Bible, no one is so humbled or depressed in

situation of life, as to be condemned to ignorance of its interesting contents.

It may be justly said of the Bible, that it ennobles the noble, it enriches the rich, it supports the poor, it guides the ignorant, and by exhibiting the bright prospects of immortal happiness, it consoles the mind of man, under the inevitable, the necessary evils, which, in this state of probation, he is called to endure.

The Bible is addressed to every man's own heart and bosom; it appeals to every man's sense and conscience; it calls on every individual, and enforces its call, by the most awful sanctions; it proposes no trifle, no unnecessary business; but it offers life or death, blessings or curses, heaven or hell.

We cannot wonder that a volume of so great consequence to the happiness and welfare of mankind, should have employed many in the study of it; many, whom it has amply rewarded, both by pleasure and profit, as their knowledge of it has encreased: and so copious is this volume in its nature, that it will still continue to be studied, and still continue amply to reward its students.

The Bible has this remarkable character belonging to it, its doctrines and its precepts are clear as light; open at once to the unprejudiced understanding; and approved at once by the unbiassed mind: even though delivered in distant ages of the world, by different persons, and

on various occasions, its principles are wonderfully uniform and similar, wonderfully energetic and impressive. But though the character of its doctrines and precepts be clearness and plainness, yet we cannot be surprised if some of its historic relations and accounts of local matters, should appear in some degree confused: it certainly would be infinitely surprising if it were not so; especially when we reflect that many of them date very early, and some of them from the birth of time itself: the very antiquity of these may render them difficult to us at the present day, without any imputation on the original writer. Others refer to customs familiar to the people to whom they were addressed; but these may be obscure to us in England, though entirely free from obscurity to the inhabitants of the parts where their author wrote. Others refer to persons of whom it is necessary to know more than these volumes have recorded, in order to judge by the whole of such person's character, of the propriety of so much as they incidentally offer; the sacred accounts may be perfect for the purpose to which they were designed, while imperfect in respect to what may be gathered from other quarters. Others refer to cities, once great and populous, now ruined and deserted; of these we wish geographical and historical information, more, perhaps, than the Bible affords. In short, it is notorious that empires, kingdoms, and states, that emperors,

kings, and statesmen, have flourished, and have ceased to flourish ; they have risen to greatness, and have sunk to oblivion, during the course of the Bible history ; by the further knowledge of their story, as collected from ancient authors, who incidentally or purposely mention the same subjects, we clear many particulars, which, in the Bible being only glanced at, appear intricate or perplexed.

There are, in the prophetic parts of this book, many which relate to particular persons and states. The completion of these prophecies is not always recorded in the Bible ; but we know from other histories that they were fulfilled ; and a knowledge of when, or how these were fulfilled, directs us to the confidence to be placed in others of the same kind, and justifies our regard to the sacred predictions in general.

There are many persons of whom we could wish to know more than is related in the Bible ; and of whom we may know more by diligent study : for example—I suppose there never was a Christian who read his Bible, who did not wish to know the end of Caiphas, of Pontius Pilate, of Herod, of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, &c. &c., all concerned in the crucifying of Jesus, our Lord : or, who did not wish to know the particulars of that punishment which fell on the Jews, and on Jerusalem for their rejection of the Messiah : or, who would not feel a satisfaction in reading the history of the accomplish-

ment of our Lord's predictions, respecting that holy place which was to be trodden down by the Gentiles: or, on another subject, I suppose every Christian, without exception, must feel a pleasure in tracing the progress of the Gospel among all nations, and its influence in reforming, humanizing, and blessing mankind.

Now if on these comparatively recent events, we desire information, and exert our industry to acquire it; if these to be properly understood, must be studied, what shall we say of events which date thousands of years before them; which, in consequence, are liable to more considerable ambiguity, if not obscurity; and from the manner in which they are related, are difficult to us now, though of no difficulty to their original readers? If we find it necessary, by perusing history, to transport ourselves eighteen hundred or two thousand years back, into past ages of time, surely it cannot be less necessary, that in articles of double that antiquity, we should use every means of information, and embrace every possible method of obtaining a competent acquaintance with them, of understanding them, and of viewing them in their true light.

Add to these considerations, the different languages in which the sacred books are written, and the necessity of intimate knowledge with the things they describe, in order to comprehend

correctly the description given of them, and we shall readily acquiesce in the conclusion, that however an attentive perusal of the Bible may make a Christian reader spiritually wise, yet there will remain many things of which he will desire to be informed; many things will appear uncouth, which he could wish were regulated; many will seem difficult, which he could wish were explained; and many on which his judgment is capable of receiving further satisfaction, even while his admission of them is frank and ready.

The manners and customs and modes of life, are so various in various countries, that with great difficulty they are explained to each other; and with still greater difficulty, their propriety is respectively admitted. The common and ordinary occurrences of life, are, in their relation, extremely embarrassing to those accustomed to a domestic oeconomy, entirely different, perhaps directly opposite: in a cold country that desire of shade which animates the inhabitants of a hot country, appears perfectly ridiculous; in a country almost daily watered by showers, the mention of rain twice a year, (the first or the second rain, or the early and the latter rain) is quite unintelligible; in a country of houses, every allusion to the properties of tents is lost, or even, perhaps is misunderstood and misemployed.

The same reasoning may be applied to the natural history of the Bible; the leviathan and behemoth may be very finely described; but who, in England, is the wiser for the description? who ever saw either of these creatures, to judge of its propriety? and for want of information on this subject, what impertinent remarks have been made! what false opinions have been vented! Some have called behemoth the elephant; some the hippopotamus (creatures equally foreign to us); some have called him the buffalo; the wild-ox; the ——; and some have called him the devil!!! Amid such uncertainty, it is desirable, if possible, to procure a just and determinate idea of the natural history of the Sacred Scriptures; and to demonstrate the proper application of the description to the creature or the subject described.

Calmet's Great Dictionary of the Holy Bible; edited by C. Taylor. 4to. Lond. 1797. Introduction.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, KNT.

A very accomplished English gentleman, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; was born 1554—slain at Zutphen 1586.

Love my memory, cherish my friends, but above all, govern your wills and affections by the will and word of your Creator. In me behold the end of this world, and all its vanities.

Penn's No Cross, No Crown. (Simpson's, Sac. Lit.)

NICOLAS ROWE.

A celebrated dramatic poet ; was born in Bedfordshire, 1673
—died 1718.

After having read most of the Greek and Roman histories in their original languages, and most that are written in English, French, Italian, and Spanish, was fully persuaded of the truth of revealed religion, expressed it upon all occasions, took great delight in divinity and ecclesiastical history, and died at last like a Christian and a philosopher, with an absolute resignation to the will of God.

Simpson's Plea for Religion.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

Bishop of Down and Connor, Ireland ; a man of very distinguished literary talents ; was born at Cambridge, 1613.

Too many scholars have lived upon air and empty notions for many ages past, and troubled themselves with tying and untying knots, like hypocondriacs in a fit of melancholy, thinking of nothings, and troubling themselves with nothings, and falling out about nothings, and being very wise and very learned in things that are not, and work not, and were never planted in Paradise by the finger of God. If the Spirit of God be our teacher, we shall learn to avoid evil and to do good, to be wise and to be holy, to be profitable and careful ; and they that walk in this way shall find more peace in their con-

sciences, more skill in the Scriptures, more satisfactions in their doubts, than can be obtained by all the polemical and impertinent disputations in the world. The man that is wise, he that is conducted by the Spirit of God, knows better, in what Christ's kingdom doth consist than to throw away his time and interest, his peace and safety, for what? for religion? no; for the body of religion? not so much; for the garment of the body of religion? no, not for so much; but for the fringes of the garment of the body of religion; for such, and no better, are many religious disputes; things, or rather circumstances and manners of things, in which the soul and spirit are not at all concerned. The knowledge which comes from godliness is something more certain and divine than all demonstration and human learning.

And now to conclude; to you I speak, fathers and brethren, you who are or intend to be of the clergy; you see here the best compendium of your studies, the best alleviation of your labours, the truest method of wisdom. It is not by reading a multitude of books, but by studying the truth of God; it is not by laborious commentaries of the doctors that you can finish your work, but the exposition of the Spirit of God; it is not by the rules of metaphysics, but by the proportions of holiness; and when all books are read, and all arguments examined, and all authorities alleged, nothing can be found

to be true that is unholy. The learning of the fathers was more owing to their piety than their skill, more to God than to themselves. These were the men that prevailed against error, because they lived according to truth. If ye walk in light, and live in the Spirit, your doctrines, will be true, and that truth will prevail.

Via Intelligentia. (From the *Sacred Classics*. 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1808.)

ANONYMOUS.

Written about the yere of our Lorde one thousand fower hundred.

Thoughe I am olde, clothed in barbarous wede,
 Nothyng garnyshyd with gay eloquensy,
 Yet I tell the truthe, if ye lyste to take hede,
 Agaynste their froward furious fantasy,
 Which reken it for a great heresy.
 And unto laye-people grievous outrage
 To haue Godes worde in their native langage.
 Enemyes I shall haue—many a shorne crowne,
 With forkid cappes, gay croosis of gold;
 Which, to mantayne their ambitious renowne,
 Are glad laye-people in ignorance to holde;
 Yet to shewe the veryte one may be bolde,
 All thoughe it be a prouerbe dayly spoken,
 —“ Who that tellyth the truthe his hed shall be
 broken.”

A compendyous Olde Treatise, shewynge how we ought to have the Scripture in Englyshe. Imprinted by me Rychard Banckes's (Montgomerie's Sacred Poems.)

WILLIAM III.

KING OF ENGLAND, 1688.

Born at the Hague, 1650—died March 8th, 1702.

Not only believed the truth of the Christian religion very firmly, but was most exemplary, decent and devout, in the public exercises and worship of God, he was an attentive hearer of sermons, and was constant in his private prayers, and in reading the Scriptures.

Simpson's Plea for Religion.

JOHN BAPTIST MASILLON.

A very eloquent and admired French preacher ; was born in Provence, 1663—died 1742.

In the histories which have been left us by men, we see nothing but the agency of man. They are men who obtain the victories, who take towns, who subdue kingdoms, who dethrone sovereigns, to elevate themselves to the supreme power : God appears in no part ; men are the sole actors of all these things. But in the history of the Holy Books it is God alone who performs the whole ; God alone causeth kings to reign, placeth them upon their thrones, or deposeth them again. It is God alone who opposeth the enemy, who sacks towns, who giveth peace or exciteth war : God alone appeareth in this sacred history ; it is he, if I may so speak,

who is the sole hero. The kings and the conquerors of the earth appear but as the ministers of his will. In short, these divine books unfold the ways of Providence. God, who conceals himself in the other events recorded in our histories, seems to reveal himself in these : and it is in this book alone that we ought to learn to read the other histories which men have left us.

The Holy Books which have preserved religion to our times contain the first monuments of the origin of things. They are more ancient than all the fabulous productions of the human mind, which have since, in so melancholy a manner, amused the credulity of the following ages. And as error always springs from truth, and is a corrupt imitation of it, it is in the principal actions of this Divine History, that the fables of Paganism find their foundation ; so that we may say, there is no error ; which pays not thereby homage to the antiquity and authority of our Sacred Writings.

The sincerity of Moses appears in the simplicity of his history. He used no precautions to gain credit, because he supposes those for whom he wrote were not destitute of faith ; and because he relates none but facts which were publicly known, to preserve the memory of them rather among their descendants, than to instruct that generation in the nature of them.

He concealeth not in a mysterious manner

the Holy Books from the people, lest they should discover the falsehood of them, like as the vain oracles of the Sybils were laid up with care in the capital, (which was built to keep up the pride of the Romans) exposed to the eyes of the priests alone, and produced from time to time by fragments to justify to the minds of the people either a dangerous enterprize or an unjust war. Here the Prophetic Books were daily read by a whole people; the young and old, the women and children, the priests and the common people, the kings and subjects, were bound without ceasing to have them in their hands; every one had right to study their duty, and to discover their hopes there. Far from flattering their pride, they declared fully the ingratitude of their fathers; they announced, in every page, their misfortunes to be the just chastisement of their crimes; they reproached kings with their lewdness, priests with their injustice, the great with their profusion, the people with their inconstancy and infidelity, and this notwithstanding their Holy Books were dear to them; and by the oracles which they saw there to be accomplished there every day, they waited with confidence the fulfilment of those, of which all the world at this day are the witnesses.

There is a nobleness, and an elevation in the maxims of the gospel, to which mean and grovelling minds cannot attain. The religion which forms great souls, appears to be made only for

them : and in order to be great, or to become so, there is a necessity of becoming a Christian.

From the Sacred Classics, 2 vols.

Lond. 12mo. 1808. Vol. 2, p. 39.

ALEXANDER POPE.

An English Poet of great elegance and popularity ; was born in London, 1688—died 1744.

The pure and noble, the graceful and dignified simplicity of language, is no where in such perfection as in the Scripture and our author. One may affirm with all respect to the inspired writings, that the *divine Spirit* made use of no other words but were intelligible and common to men at that time, and in that part of the world.

Preface to Homer.

ANONYMOUS.

THAT THE GOSPEL IS AN OBJECT OF BELIEF.

In an age so enlightened as the present, when we have thrown off all other mean prejudices of nature and education, it is no wonder, that we should discard the gospel ; and I am almost in doubt, whether I should mention the belief of it as a VULGAR ERROR, since it daily loses its credit among us. Wherefore if I may not be allowed to set down the belief in a God, a Saviour, a future state, the immortality of the soul, &c. &c. as prevailing errors, I cannot omit so fair an

opportunity of congratulating my cotemporaries on their having overcome them. Nor can I better conclude this paper than by an hint to my friends, the Freethinkers, cautioning them to consider, whether, if we were made by chance, the world was made by chance, and every thing else was made by chance, there may not also be an Hell by chance!

The Connoisseur. No. 109.

NICHOLAS BOILEAU, SR. DESPREAUX.

The great master and ornament of French Poetry ; was born, 1636—died 1711.

Every word and syllable of the Bible ought to be adored : it not only cannot be enough admired, but it cannot be too much admired.

Simpson's Plea for Religion.

ENCYCLOP. METROPOLITANA.

The Bible contains, not merely the only authentic, but the only clear and consistent account of the remotest ages of the world ; and that, too, communicated in a manner adapted to subserve the highest moral and religious purposes, inasmuch as it shows us how, in preparing mankind for another world, the universal Parent has dealt with individuals, with families, and with nations in this.

It may safely be averred, putting the question of inspiration altogether out of view, that the natural character of the sacred historians ranks

them with the first of human beings. In point of grandeur and sublimity of conception, of discrimination, of unaffected simplicity, of ingenuous disinterestedness, of unbending integrity, of successful execution, they are unrivalled; and it is only necessary to compare their productions with the most admired compositions of antiquity, to assign to them, unhesitatingly, the preference. From the enactments of Moses, almost all legislation has been drawn, both as to principle and as to form; and where any departure from this grand outline, is attempted, the change has been perceptibly for the worse; while the most elegant critic of the heathen world has produced the opening of his narrative, as the most striking specimen of the true sublime which could be presented. “God said—what? Be light; and light was. Be earth, and it was so.” Few will dispute the authority of Longinus on such a subject, and none can doubt his taste and judgement. If sacred history be tried by the character of its narrators, it wears the marks of undoubted authenticity.

Let it be tried by the events narrated; another important criterion of history. The earliest and most interesting events form the subject of its records. It begins, where revelation must be supposed to commence its testimony, with the origin of the visible creation. The first inquiries of man are directed towards the material universe, himself constituting so noble a part of it,

and its destinies being so inseparably associated with his own.

Urged by a nobler impulse than curiosity, he endeavours to retrace the stream of time to its fountain, and to penetrate even to the infinite Cause, by whom all events are generated. What was to the philosopher a subject of speculation, giving birth to numberless and contradictory hypotheses, is to Moses simply a subject of history. The first sentence of his narrative unveils the hidden and eternal cause, settles the disputes of philosophy, assumes the fact of the creation, declares the Creator, and proceeds to a detail of the circumstances attending the stupendous transaction: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth;" a grandeur of expression, not inferior, perhaps, to the celebrated passage so distinguished by Longinus. Around this revealed truth, as a central point, the scattered schemes of philosophy rally, correcting their errors, reconciling their differences, and contributing their researches; science finds the base upon which to place a fulcrum that can raise the world; history discovers the spring of the ever-flowing tide of time; and chronology, the *punctum-stans*—the fixed, determinate, immoveable point, whence all her dates are deduced, and to which all divisions of time are to be referred. This great fact being established, the historian proceeds briefly, yet distinctly, to enumerate the leading particulars of this opera-

tion ; passes on to a consideration of man's primeval state ; unfolds the fact attending his degradation, leading to the miseries to which he is exposed, and accounting for "the thousand natural shocks, that flesh is heir to." The narrative thus instantly connects itself with the scheme chosen for his recovery, into which all other events necessarily resolve themselves ; and the grand march of providence is distinctly visible through all the shadows of ages—from the chorus of the sons of God at the birth of nature, to the final shout of the archangel, and the trumpet which shall awaken the dead.

To go over the various periods of this history forms no part of our business here ; but to advert to them thus generally, is sufficient to establish the position, that the events recorded are such, in their nature, as might be expected from revelation, and as are suitable to the dignity and purposes of history. To apply to them the general rule of historical judgement, they have all the collateral evidences of which such facts could be capable. Moses has no contemporary historian ; the most ancient writers fall centuries after him ; and he records events which took place centuries before his birth. The deluge forms the common epoch from which all nations commence their records ; and under different names, Noah is the first monarch announced in history. Traditions relative to the creation agree with the narrative of Moses in

all essential points, and even in form, whatever speculations and fables may disfigure the simple account. Historians, and poets more ancient than historians, drew from this common source.

Traditions of the fall are to be traced over all the east, and among the western nations, they traverse the north, and occupy the south, they have penetrated the wilds of America, and are planted in the islands of the Pacific Ocean ; in truth, the forms of worship and observances added to these traditions, every where authenticate the Mosaic narrative ; and from their universality, which would have been impossible had they not originated in fact, a sanction is given to sacred history, which could scarcely have been expected, which is altogether unexceptionable, because it is indirect in its nature, and infinitely diversified in its form.

It is no small collateral proof of the truth of sacred history, that it furnishes a clue to many facts which, although known, could not have been understood without its assistance. It serves to correct other historians ; and in every instance in which the sacred writings and general history come into contact, it is to them, what the chronometer is to the common watch—it measures the same period, but does it with superior precision ; it relates the same events, but with greater accuracy. Still further, as the floating traditions of the heathen world bear

upon the facts recorded in the Scriptures ; so, by a re-action, sacred history developes the hidden import of many an ancient institution, the intention of which was not comprehended by those who lived under it, nor could it be otherwise understood ; and gives consistency and reality to the traditions of antiquity. It brings distant occurrences to bear upon each other ; it discloses political interests, jarring among themselves, all tending to the harmony of the universe, and the ultimate amelioration of the human race. It supplies, in short, to time, what gravity is to space—the *principle* which holds and draws every thing together.

If we examine the manner of narration ; one of the most striking features of sacred history, which, while it demonstrates its authenticity, renders it invaluable, is the fidelity with which it relates occurrences offensive to the existing powers, and not always honorable to the historian himself. Patriotism is evidently a moral principle highly appreciated by Moses ; yet he disguises nothing that reflects disgrace upon his country.

While he could even desire to sacrifice himself for the interests of the people whom he governed, yet he never conceals and never palliates their rebellions, their ingratitude, or their vices. Self-love cannot be supposed to have been extinguished in the bosom of the historian ; yet he records his own follies and infirmities.

with the same simplicity and sincerity with which he wrote down the sins of his countrymen. What a principle must that have been, which could thus absorb the prejudices of the writer, and induce him, with whatever painful feelings, to give his testimony alike against himself and his people! This faithfulness is especially exhibited in the biography of the Old and New Testaments. It is more difficult to be honest in this, than is almost any other species of writing. In history, the disgraces of a country are borne by multitudes; the guilt of a people, large in itself, is so divided among them, that the individual participation appears comparatively small, while our self-love induces us to take more than our share of the honors; but in biography the attention is fixed upon an individual, to whom the whole praise or blame exclusively belongs. The writer also, in most instances, stands in some personal relation to him. If as a friend, he too frequently gives the *beau ideal*, the creature of his own imagination, instead of the living being whose characteristics he professes to have marked, as they arose, and to have written down in all the reality of their existence. If as an enemy, it is difficult for him to perceive, and still more difficult to record, real excellencies. He sometimes dips his pen, not in ink but in the gall which flows from an envious heart, and in no instance fails to give a tone to his narrative corresponding with the actual state

of his feelings in respect of his subject. In this, as in all other cases, sacred history maintains its high purity of character ; and the same inflexible adherence to facts, and the same simplicity of detail, pervades in biography. The writer is, indeed, always a “man of like passions with others,” but his passions are subordinate to sincerity and truth. Abraham, “the friend of God,” shall be placed before us in all the pusillanimity of his equivocation, as well as in all the strength of his faith ;—Balaam, the adversary of Israel, shall be delineated by the Jewish historian in all the intellectual grandeur of his mind ; and his sins, and his talents, shall be given in the same clear, unruffled, undisguised language. Unquestionably, the great object for which the whole narrative is placed before us, is to impress the claims of truth and virtue on the mind, and to win us to the path of wisdom by exhibiting its rewards. But the difficulties of a wise and virtuous course are not disguised. The total failures of some who have entered upon it ; the partial failures of all ; Cain, and Esau, and Lot’s wife, and Balaam, and Saul, stand in faithful record of a total departure from what most men would have thought the fear of God ; while the Scripture history of Noah, and of Abraham, of Lot, and of David, of Solomon and of Peter, as faithfully exhibits the temptations that have charms for us all, and the failures of God’s most favoured children. The whole Bible

breathes the same tone of noble frankness. One is constantly reminded of God, who "cannot lie."

There are peculiarities belonging to sacred history, so remote from every thing seen among men, and such an unearthly character, is given to some of its relations of apparently ordinary concerns, that the most superficial observer can scarcely fail to distinguish it from every merely human production. Its true and faithful portraiture of our own nature, its appeal to the heart of the reader, alone suffices to establish this observation. There is a knowledge of the human heart, a master key to its subtlest recesses, which not only surpasses human penetration in its origin, but astonishes while it terrifies the individual whose bosom is laid open to his own inspection; and who finds himself a stranger, where he had thought himself most at home. Perhaps this is a fact more striking than even its impartial delineation of the character of others; and, certainly infinitely more important to us. Not a lurking passion is suffered to remain undetected in its living pictures. Motives which we should be ashamed to avow, are dragged before our conscience in the history of another; and while his sentence is passed we feel a personal condemnation. This is, indeed, the true, and highest use of history: to speak the heart through the understanding; to make every character that is brought before us pro-

mote the formation and consolidation of our own.

*Sub-Introduction, in Encyclop. Metropolitana.
(from Carpenter's Biblical Companion.)*

WILLIAM ROMAINE, A. M.,

Was born at Hartlepool in the County of Durham, Sept. 1714.

UPON THE MORAL LAW.

The great Creator and possessor of heaven and earth hath an indisputable authority to make laws for the government of his creatures, and to require their obedience. Since every thing that they have is received from his hands, and held under him at his pleasure, it therefore behoves them to inquire upon what terms they hold it. And if God has given them any laws, it is their duty to study them, and their interest to obey them. If there be any sanctions to enforce these laws, and rewards and punishments, they should inquire where these things are to be known, and by what means discovered, that they may obtain the reward and escape the punishment.

Whenever a serious unprejudiced person desires to be satisfied in these points, which so nearly concern his present peace of conscience and his future happiness, he will soon be convinced that God has made a gracious provision for his instruction. God has opened his mind and will in this matter. He has recorded his laws and published them. The Sacred Volume

of Divine Statutes is in our hands, and in our mother tongue. It is so very short that none can want time to peruse it; and it is so very plain and intelligible, as to the rule of duty that none can plead ignorance. He that runs may read it, and the simple may understand it, and learn knowledge; for, upon a very cursory view of this Divine Treatise, it will appear, there are three distinct bodies of law mentioned in it; namely, the moral law, the ceremonial law, and the law of faith. We are all highly concerned to inquire into the nature of these laws.

Works, 8vo. London, (*Blake*,) 1837, p. 48.

SIR WILLIAM JONES,

One of the most accomplished scholars in Europe. Born 1746—died 1794.

But I cannot refrain from adding, that the collection of tracts, which we call from their excellence the Scriptures, contain, independently of a divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected from all other books, that were ever composed in any age or in any idiom. The two parts of which the Scriptures consist, are connected by a chain of compositions, which bear no resemblance in form of style to any that can be produced from the stores of Grecian, Indian, Persian, or even Arabian learning; the antiquity of those

compositions no man doubts ; and the unstrained application of them to events long subsequent to their publication, is a solid ground of belief that they were genuine productions, and consequently inspired.

Sir W. Jones's works, 6 vols.
4to. 1797. Vol. i. p. 127.

DANIEL DE FOE.

A voluminous and very ingenious Writer, Author of Robinson Crusoe, born in London about 1663—died 1731.

The Bible is your rule of life. Though the Spirit is the secret instructor, the scripture is the key of instruction. There you are to learn how God is to be worshipped ; how to order your conversation aright ; how to perform your duty, and what it is the Lord thy God requires of thee. There you have an historical account of the whole world : of its creation, the fall, the first condemnation of it to a general deluge ; typical of the great deluge of God's wrath, which shall drown all ungodly men for ever. There you have the history of God's church, from the beginning to the fulness of time, and the fulfilling Old Testament types, and Old Testament promises. There you have the history of our Saviour, of his miraculous conception and birth, holy life, wondrous doctrine, stupendous miracles ; his death, passion, resurrection, and glorious ascension. There you have an account of the first mission of the Holy Ghost, and at last

the whole doctrine of the gospel of truth, founded upon the redemption purchased by Christ. There you have the whole mystery of godliness unfolded; the great wonder of wonders! the immortal to die! and the eternal to begin! the great destruction of sin, the condemnation of the devil, and the salvation of the world.

All this is to be seen in the Bible; which being the word of God, you are to read it with reverence, regard it with faith as the word of God, and obey it as your rule.

Family Instructor.

The gospel is the word of God, the message of life sent from heaven, revealed in the scriptures, and preached by his servants the ministers.

Idem.

The Bible is the word of God, it was dictated by the inspiration of the Spirit of God; when you read the Bible, you are to believe that God speaks to you in the words you read; this is his voice.

Idem.

LORD BACON.

And hence it is true, that it hath proceeded, that divers great learned men have beene Hereticall, whilst they have sought to fly up to the secrets of the Deity, by the waxen winges of the

senses : And as for the conceite that too much knowledge should incline a man to atheisme, and that the ignorance of second causes should make a more devout dependance upon God, which is the first cause : First, it is good to aske the question, which “ Job ” asked of his friends : “ Will you lye for God, as one man will doe for another, to gratifie him ? ” for certain it is, that God worketh nothing in nature, but by second causes, and if they would have it otherwise believed, it is meere imposture, as it were in favour towards God ; and nothing else, but to offer to the Author of Truth, the uncleane sacrifice of a lye. But farther, it is an assured truth, and a conclusion of experience, that a little or superficial knowledge of philosophy may incline the minde of man to atheisme, but a farther proceeding therein doth bring the mind backe againe to religion : For in the entrance of philosophy ; when the second causes, which are next unto the senses, doe offer themselves to the minde of man, if it dwell and stay there, it may induce some oblivion of the highest cause ; but when a man passeth on farther, and seeth the dependance of causes, and the workes of Providence ; then according to the allegory of the poets, hee will easily beleieve that the highest linke of natures chayne must needs be tyed to the foot of Jupiters Chayre. To conclude therefore, let no man upon a weake conceite of sobriety, or an

ill applyed moderation thinke or maintaine, that a man can search too farre, or be too well studied in the booke of God's word, or in the booke of Gods workes; divinity or philosophy; but rather let men endeavour an endlesse progresse, or proficiencie in both: only let men beware that they apply both to charity, and not to swelling; to use, and not to ostentation; and againe, that they doe not unwisely mingle, or confound these learnings together.

Advancement of Learning.

We see the coate of our Saviour was entire without seame, and so is the doctrine of the Scriptures in it selfe: but the garment of the church was of divers colours, and yet not divided: wee see the chaffe may and ought to be secured from the corne in the eare: but the tares may not be pulled up from the corne in the field: so as it is a thing of great use well to define, what, and of what latitude those points are, which doe make men meerey aliens and disincorporate from the church of God.

For the obtaining of the information, it resteth upon the true and sound interpretation of the Scriptures, which are the fountaines of the water of life. The interpretations of the Scriptures are of two sorts: methodicall, and solute, or at large for this divine water which excelleth so much that of Jacob's well, is drawne forth much

in the same kinde, as naturall water useth to bee out of wells and fountaines: either it is first forced up into a cesterne, and from thence fetcht and derived for use: or else it is drawne and received in buckets and vessels immediately where it springeth. The former sort whereof though it seeme to bee the more ready, yet in my judgement is more subject to corrupt. This is that method which hath exhibited unto us the scholasticall divinity, whereby divinity hath bin reduced into an art, as into a cesterne, and the streames of doctrine or positions fetcht and derived from thence.

In this, men have sought three things, a summary brevity, a compacted strength, and a compleate perfection: whereof the two first they faile to finde, and the last they ought not to seeke. For as to brevity, we see in all summary methods, while men purpose to abridge, they give cause to dilate. For the summe or abridgement by contraction becommeth obscure, the obscurity requireth exposition, and the exposition is diduced into large commentaries, or into common places, and titles, which grow to bee more vast then the originall writings, whence the summe was at first extracted. So we see the volumes of the schoole-men are greater much then the first writings of the fathers, whence the master of the sentences made his summe or collection. So in like manner the volumes of

the moderne doctors of the civil law exceed those of the ancient jurisconsults, of which Tribonian compiled the digest. So as this course of summes and commentaries is that which doth infallably make the body of sciences more immense in quantity, and more base in substance.

And for strength, it is true, that knowledges reduced into exact methods have a shew of strength, in that each part seemeth to support and sustaine the other; but this is more satisfactory then substantiall, like unto buildings, which stand by architecture and compaction, which are more subject to ruine, then those which are built more strong in their severall parts though lesse compacted. But it is plaine that the more you recede from your grounds, the weaker doe you conclude; and as in nature, the more you remove your selfe from particulars the greater perill of error you doe incurre: so much more in divinity, the more you recede from the Scriptures by inferences and consequences, the more weak and dilute are your positions.

And as for perfection, or compleatnesse in divinity, it is not to be sought, which makes this course of artificiall divinity the more suspect: for hee that will reduce a knowledge into an art, will make it round and uniforme: but in divinity many things must be left abrupt and concluded with this: *O altitudo sapientiæ, et scientiæ Dei, quæ incomprehensibilia sunt iudicia ejus, et non investigabiles via eius*: so againe

the apostle saith, *Ex parte scimus*, and to have the forme of a totall, where there is but matter for a part, cannot be without supplies by supposition and presumption. And therefore I conclude that the true use of these summes and methods hath place in institutions or introductions, preparatory unto knowledge: but in them, or by diducement from them, to handle the maine body and substance of a knowledge, is in all sciences prejudiciall, and in divinity dangerous.

As to the interpretation of the Scriptures solute and at large, there have beene divers kindes introduced and devised, some of them rather curious and unsafe, then sober and warranted. Notwithstanding thus much must be confessed, that the Scriptures being given by inspiration, and not by humane reason, doe differ from all other bookes in the author: which by consequence doth drawe on some difference to be used by the expositor. For the inditer of them did know foure things which no man attaines to know, which are the mysteries of the kingdome of glory; the perfection of the lawes of nature, the secrets of the heart of man; and the future succession of all ages. For as to the first, it is said. "He that presseth into the light, shall bee oppressed of the glory." And againe, "No man shall see my face and live." To the second, "When he prepared the heavens I was present, when by law and compasse he enclosed the deepe;" to the third, "Neither was it needfull

that any should beare witnesse to him of man, for hee knew well what was in man." And to the last, "From the beginning are knowne to the Lord all his workes."

From the former of these two have bin drawne certaine senses and expositions of Scriptures, which had need be contained within the bounds of sobriety; the one *anagogicall*, and the other *philosophicall*. But as to the former, man is not to prevent his time; *videmus nunc per speculum in ænigmate, tunc autē facie ad faciē* wherein nevertheless there seemeth to be a liberty granted, as farre forth as the polishing of this glasse, or some moderate explication of this *ænigma*. But to presse too far into it cannot but cause a dissolution and overthrow of the spirit of man. For in the body there are three degrees of that we receive into it: aliment, medicine and poyson, whereof aliment is that which the nature of man can perfectly alter and overcome: medicine, is that which is partly converted by nature and partly converteth nature: and poison is that which worketh wholly upon nature, without that, that nature can in any part worke upon it. So in the minde whatsoever knowledge reason cannot at all worke upon and convert, is a meere intoxication, and indangereth a dissolution of the mind and understanding.

But for the latter, it hath beene extreemely set on foot of late time by the schoole of Para-

celsus, and some others, that have pretended to finde the truth of all naturall philosophy in the Scriptures; scandalizing and traducing all other philosophy: as heathenish and profane: but there is no such enmity betweene God's word, and his workes. Neither doe they give honour to the Scriptures as they suppose, but much imbase them. For to seeke heaven and earth in the word of God, whereof it is said, "Heaven and earth shall passe, but my word shall not passe," is to seeke temporary things amongst eternall. And as to seeke divinity in philosophy, is to seeke the living amongst the dead; so to seeke philosophy in divinity is to seek the dead amongst the living; neither are the pots or lavers, whose place was in the outward part of the temple, to bee sought in the holiest place of all, where the arke of the testimony was seated. And againe, the scope or purpose of the Spirit of God is not to expresse matters of nature in the Scriptures, otherwise then in passage, and for application to mans capacity and to matters morall or divine. And it is a true rule, *authoris aliud agentis parva autoritas*. For it were a strange conclusion, if a man should use a similitude for ornament or illustration sake, borrowed from nature or history, according to vulgar conceit, as of a basiliske, an unicorn, a centaure, a Briareus, an hydra, or the like, that therefore he must needs bee thought to affirme the matter thereof positively to be true; to conclude therefore

these two interpretations, the one by reduction of ænigmaticall, the other philosophicall or physical, which have bin received and pursued in imitation of the rabbins and cabalists, are to be confined with a *noli altum sapere, sed time*.

But the two latter points knowne to God, and unknowne to man ; touching the secrets of the heart, and the successions of time, doth make a just and sound difference betweene the manner of the exposition of the Scriptures : and all other bookes. For it is an excellent observation which hath beene made upon the answers of our Saviour Christ to many of the questions which were propounded to him, how that they are impertinent to the state of the question demanded, the reason whereof is, because not being like man, which knowes mans thoughts by his words, but knowing mans thoughts immediately, hee never answered their words, but their thoughts : much in the like manner it is with the Scriptures, which being written to the thoughts of men, and to the succession of all ages, with a foresight of all heresies, contradictions, differing estates of the church, yea, and particularly of the elect, are not to be interpreted only according to the latitude of the proper sense of the place, and respectively towards that present occasion, whereupon the words were uttered ; or in precise congruity or contexture with the words before or after, or in contemplation of the principall scope of the

place, but have in themselves not only totally, or collectively, but distributively in clauses and words infinite springs and streams of doctrine to water the church in every part, and therefore as the litterall sense is as it were the maine streame or river: so the morall sense chiefly, and sometimes the allegoricall or typicall are they whereof the church hath most use: not that I wish men to be bold in allegories, or indulgent or light in allusions: but that I doe much condemne that interpretation of the Scripture which is only after the manner as men use to interpret a prophane booke.

In this part touching the exposition of the Scriptures, I can report no deficiencie; but by way of remembrance this I will adde. In perusing bookes of divinitie I find many bookes of controversies, and many of common places and treatises, a masse of positive divinitie, as it is made an art: a number of sermons and lectures, and many prolix commentaries upon the Scriptures, with harmonies and concordances: but that forme of writing in divinitie, which in my judgement is of all others most rich and precious, is positive divinitie collected upon particular texts of Scriptures in brieve observations, not dilated into common places; not chaseing after controversies, not reduced into methode of art, a thing abounding in sermons, which will vanish, but defective in bookes which will remaine, and a thing wherein this age excelleth. For I am

perswaded, and I may speake it, with an *absit invidia verbo*, and no waies in derogation of antiquitie, but as in good emulation betweene the vine and the olive, that if the choice, and best of those observations upon texts of Scriptures which have beene made dispersedly in sermons within this your Majesties (Charles I.) island of Brittanie by the space of these forty yeares and more (leaving out the largenesse of exhortations and applications thereupon) had been set downe in a continuance, it had beene the best worke in divinitie, which had been written since the apostles times.

Idem.

Thy creatures have been my books, but thy Scriptures much more; I have sought thee in the courts, fields and gardens, but I have found thee in thy temples.

Idem.

(I believe) that the Word of God, whereby his will is revealed, continued in revelation and tradition with Moses; and that the Scriptures were from Moses's time to the time of the Apostles and Evangelists; in whose ages, after the coming of the Holy Ghost, the book of Scripture was shut and closed, so as not to receive any new addition; and that the church hath no power after the Scriptures to teach and command any thing contrary to the written

word, but is the ark, wherein the tables of the first testament were kept and preserved; that is to say, the church hath only the custody and delivery over the Scriptures committed to the same; together with the interpretation of them, but such only as is conceived from themselves.

Confessions of Faith.

NICHOLAS CAUSSIN.

A learned French Jesuit and Confessor of Lewis XIII.; was born at Troyes in Champagne, 1580—died 1651.

To speak properly, we have but two great books, the Heaven and the Bible, which never perish; the others have an air, and a certain continuance amongst men, and at the last arrive unto their period; but the most part of those who at this day do write, do come into the world, as drops of rain into the sea, of which the ocean takes no notice, neither of their coming in or their going out.

The Holy Court, translated from the French by Sir T. H. and others. Lond. 1650. The Design, &c.

ANONYMOUS.

Amidst the splendid improvements which now dazzle the world, it is our glory to behold the Bible traversing the globe, till the “Sun of Righteousness” irradiates alike the palace and the cottage. But while every talent is roused into action, to “prepare the way,” while every hand is extended to “exalt every valley, and level

every mountain and hill," is it pardonable to suggest, that, even amongst those who are ambitious to promote the magnificent design, there are many who are but superficially acquainted with the contents of that invaluable book?

Incredible as it may seem, there is certainly an erroneous indifference in many people, who venerate the Scriptures as the volume of inspiration, to the study of the Old Testament, especially the writings of Moses. They reverence the New Testament, as, "the gospel of glad tidings," without knowing, that if one is the casket, the other is the key, which displays the treasure in the clearest point of view. The value of Scripture history, as the only authentic account we possess of the earliest ages, and the most instructive mirror of man, is, perhaps, not yet estimated as it ought to be; for in it only we contemplate characters and events recorded without prejudice or partiality.

Let us endeavour to ascertain, with a seriousness corresponding to the magnitude of the subject, the authority on which these truths are given us, and if we find, as we certainly shall, that they will bear the severest scrutiny, let us acquiesce in silence, while we humbly feel their superiority to our limited reason.

Conversations on the Bible; by a Lady. 8vo. Lond. 1824.

THE BIBLE.

Hast thou ever heard
Of such a book? The author God himself;
The subject, God and man, salvation, life
And death—eternal life, eternal death—
Dread words! whose meaning has no end, no
bounds—

Most wondrous book! bright candle of the
Lord!

Star of eternity! the only star
By which the bark of man could navigate
The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss
Securely! the only star which rose on time,
And on its dark and troubled billows, still,
As generation, drifting swiftly by,
Succeeded generation, threw a ray
Of heaven's own light, and to the hills of God,
The eternal hills, pointed the sinner's eye.
This Book, this holy Book, on every line
Mark'd with the seal of high divinity,
On every leaf bedew'd with drops of love
Divine, and with the eternal heraldry
And signature of God Almighty stamp'd
From first to last, this ray of sacred light,
This lamp, from off the everlasting throne,
Mercy took down, and in the night of time
Stood, casting on the dark her gracious bow;
And evermore beseeching men, with tears
And earnest sighs, to hear, believe, and live,

And many to her voice gave ear, and read,
 Believed, obeyed; and now, as the Amen,
 True, faithful witness swore, with snowy robes
 And branchy palms surround the fount of life,
 And drink the streams of immortality,
 For ever happy, and for ever young.

Gems of Sacred Poetry. 32mo. 5th ed. Lond.

Printed for the Religious Tract Society, p. 178.

RICHARD HOOKER.

An eminent English divine; was born near Exeter, 1554;
 died 1600.

THE SUFFICIENCIE OF SCRIPTURE.

Although the Scripture of God therefore be stored with infinite varietie of matter in all kinds, although it abounde with all sorts of lawes, yet the principal intent of scripture is to deliver the lawes of duties supernaturall. Oftentimes it hath been in very solemne maner disputed, whether all things necessary unto salvation be necessarily set down in the Holy Scriptures or no. If we define that necessary unto salvation, whereby the way to salvation is in any sort made more plain, apparent and easie to be known, then is there no part of true philosophie, no art of account, no kind of science, rightly so called, but the Scripture must containe it. If onely those things be necessary, as surely none else are, without the knowledge and practise whereof it is not the will and pleasure of God to make any ordinary graunt of salvation; it may be not-

withstanding, and oftentimes hath bene demanded, how the bookes of Holy Scripture containe in them all necessary things, when of things necessary the very chiefest is to know what bookes we are bound to esteeme holy ; which point is confest impossible for the Scripture itselfe to teach. Whereunto, we may answer with truth, that there is not in the world any art or science which proposing unto it selfe an ende (as every one doth some ende or other) hath bene therefore thought defective, if it have not delivered simply whatsoever is needfull to the same ende : but all kinds of knowledge have their certaine bounds and limits ; each of them presupposeth many necessary things learned in other sciences and knowne beforehand. He that should take upon him to teach men how to be eloquent in pleading causes, must needes deliver unto them whatsoever precepts are requisite unto that ende, otherwise he doth not that which he taketh upon him. Seeing then no man can plead eloquently unlesse he be able first to speake, it followeth that abilitie of speech is in this case a thing most necessary. Notwithstanding every man would thinke it ridiculous, that he which undertaketh by writing to instruct an orator, should therefore deliver all the precepts of grammar ; because his profession is to deliver precepts necessary unto eloquent speech, yet so, that they which are to receive them bee taught beforehand, so much of that which is

thereunto necessary as comprehendeth the skill of speaking. In like sort, albeit Scripture do professe to conteine in it all things which are necessary unto salvation ; yet the meaning cannot bee simply of all things which are necessarie, but all things that are necessary in some certaine kind or forme ; as all things that are necessary, and either could not at all, or could not easilie be knowne by the light of naturall discourse ; all things which are necessary to be knowne that we may be saved, but knowne with presupposall of knowledge concerning certaine principles, whereof it receaveth us already perswaded, and then instructeth us in all the residue that are necessary. In the number of these principles one is the sacred authority of Scripture. Being therefore perswaded by other meanes that these Scriptures are the oracles of God, themselves do then teach us the rest, and lay before us all the duties which God requireth at our hands as necessary unto salvation. Further there hath bene some doubt likewise, whether conteining in Scripture do import expresse setting downe, in plaine tearmes or else comprehending in such sort that by reason we may from thence conclude all things which are necessary. Against the former of these two constructions, instance hath sundrie wayes bene given. For our beliefe in the Trinity, the Coeternity of the Sonne of God with his Father, the proceeding of the Spirite from the Father and the Sonne, the duty of baptizing in-

fants, these with such other principall points, the necessity whereof is by none denied, are notwithstanding in Scripture no where to be found by expresse literall mention, only deduced they are out of Scripture by collection. This kind of comprehension in Scripture being therefore received, still there is doubt how far we are to proceed by collection, before the full and complete measure of things necessary be made up. For let us not thinke that as long as the world doth endure, the wit of man shall bee able to sound the bottome of that which may bee concluded out of the Scripture; especially if thinges contained by collection do so far extend, as to draw in whatsoever may be at any time out of Scripture but probably and conjecturally surmised. But let necessary collection be made requisite, and we may boldly deny, that of all those things which are at this day, are with so great necessity urged upon this church under the name of reformed church discipline, there is any one which their bookes hitherto have made manifest to be contained in the Scripture. Let them if they can alledge but one properly belonging to their cause, and not common to them and us, and shew the deduction thereof out of Scripture to be necessarie. It hath beene already shewed, how all things necessarie unto salvation in such sort as before we have maintained, must needes be possible for men to knowe; and that many things are in such sort necessarie, the knowledge whereof

is by the light of nature impossible to be attained. Whereupon it followeth, that either all flesh is excluded from possibility of salvation, which to thinke were most barbarous; or else that God hath by supernaturall meanes revealed the way of life so far forth as doth suffice. For this cause, God hath so many times and waies spoken to the sonnes of men. Neither hath he by speech only, but by writing also instructed and taught his church. The cause of writing hath been to the end that things by him revealed unto the world, might have the longer continuance, and the greater certainty of assurance; by how much that which standeth on record, hath in both those respects pre-eminence, above that which passeth from hand to hand, and hath no pennes but the toongs, no bookes but the ears of men to record it. The several bookes of Scripture having had each some several occasion and particular purpose which caused them to be written, the contents thereof are according to the exigence of that speciall end whereunto they are intended. Hereupon it groweth, that every booke of Holy Scripture doth take out of all kindes of truth, naturall, historicall, forreine, supernaturall, so much as the matter handled requireth. Now for as much as there hath bene reason alledged sufficient to conclude, that all things necessary unto salvation must be made knowne, and that God himselfe hath therefore revealed his will, because otherwise men could

not have knowne so much as is necessary ; his surceasing to speak to the world since the publishing of the gospell of Jesus Christ, and the delivery of the same in writing, is unto us a manifest token that the way of salvation is now sufficiently opened, and that we neede no other meanes for our full instruction, than God hath already furnished us withall. The maine drift of the whole Newe Testament, is that which Saint John setteth downe as the purpose of his owne historie, "These things are written, that yee might beleieve that Jesus is Christ, the Sonne of God, and that in beleeeving yee might have life through his name." The drift of the Olde, that which the apostle mentioneth to Timothie, "The Holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation." So that the generall ende both of Olde and Newe is one ; the difference betweene them consisting in this, that the Olde did make wise by teaching salvation through Christ that should come ; the Newe by teaching that Christ the Saviour is come, and that Jesus whom the Jewes did crucifie, and whom God did raise againe from the dead, is he. When the apostle therefore affirmeth unto Timothie, that the Olde was able to make him wise to saluation, it was not his meaning that the Olde alone can do this unto us which live sithence the publication of the Newe. For he speaketh with presupposall of the doctrine of Christ knowne also unto Timothie ;

and therefore first it is sayd, "Continue thou in those things which thou hast learned and art perswaded, knowing of whom thou hast bene taught them." Againe those Scriptures hee graunteth were able to make him wise to saluation; but he addeth, "through the faith which is in Christ." Wherefore without the doctrine of the New Testament teaching that Christ hath wrought the redemption of the world, which redemption the Olde did foreshewe he should worke; it is not the former alone which can on our behalfe performe so much as the apostle doth auouch, who presupposeth this when he magnifieth that so highly. And as his words concerning the bookes of auncient Scripture, do not take place but with presupposall of the gospel of Christ embraced: so our owne wordes also when we extoll the complete sufficiency of the whole intire body of the Scripture, must in like sorte be understood with this caution, that the benefit of natures light be not thought excluded as unnecessarie, because the necessitie of a diviner light is magnified. There is in Scripture therefore no defect, but that any man what place or calling soever he hold in the church of God, may have thereby the light of his naturall understanding so perfected, that the one being relieved by the other, there can want no part of needfull instruction unto any good worke which God himself requireth, be it naturall or supernaturall, belonging simply unto men

as men, or unto men as they are united in whatsoever kind of societie. It sufficeth therefore that nature and Scripture do serve in such full sort, that they both joyntly, and not severally either of them, be so complete, that unto everlasting felicitie we need not the knowledge of any thing more than these two may easily furnish our mindes with on all sides : and therefore they which adde traditions as a part of supernaturall necessarie truth, haue not the truth, but are in error. For they onely pleade, that whatsoever God revealeth as necessary for all Christian men to do or beleieve, the same we ought to embrace, whether we have received it by writing or otherwise; which no man denieth: when that which they should confirm who claime so great reverence unto traditions is, that the same traditions are necessarily to bee acknowledged divine and holy. For we doe not reject them onely because they are not in the Scripture, but because they are neither in Scripture, nor can otherwise sufficiently by any reason be proved to be of God. That which is of God, and may be evidently proved to be so, we deny not but it hath in his kind, although unwritten, yet the selfe same force and authoritie with the written lawes of God. It is by ours acknowledged, that the apostles did in every church institute and ordeine some rites and customes serving for the seemlinesse of church regiment, which rites and customs they have not committed unto writing. Those

rites and customes being knowne to be apostolicall, and having the natures of things changeable, were no lesse too accompted of in the church then other things of the like degree, that is to say, capable in like sort of alteration, although set downe in the apostles writings. For both being knowne to be apostolicall, it is not the manner of delivering them unto the church, but the author from whom they proceed, which doth give them their force and credite.

Ecclesiasticall Politie, fol. Lond. 1632. b. 1, p. 83, et seq.

EZEKIEL HOPKINS.

Bishop of Londonderry, a learned and worthy prelate; was born in Devonshire, 1633—died 1690.

Some complain that the Scripture is obscure, and difficult to be understood. After allowing that there are profound depths in the word of God, which require our humble veneration, though our understanding cannot reach them; The Scripture is suited to every capacity. It is, as it is commonly expressed, a ford, wherein a lamb may wade, and an elephant swim. And herein is the infinite wisdom of God seen, in wreathing together plain truths with obscure, that he might gain the more credit to his word; by the one, instructing the ignorance of the weakest; by the other, puzzling and confounding the understanding of the wisest.

There are in the Scripture sublime truths,

which the most aspiring reason of man cannot overtop ; and there are more plain and easy truths, in which the weakest capacity may converse with delight and satisfaction.—Those truths, which are absolutely necessary to salvation, are as plainly, without either obscurity or ambiguity, recorded in Scripture, as if they were (as the Mahometans think concerning their Alcoran) written with ink made of light. There the necessity of faith in Jesus Christ, of repentance from dead works, of a holy and mortified life, are so clearly set down, that scarce have there been found any so impudent, as to raise controversies about them.—Bless God, that he hath so clearly revealed the necessary and practical duties of a Christian life, that those are involved in no mystical or obscure intimations ; but that thou mayest without doubt or dispute, know what is of absolute necessity to be either believed or practised, in order to salvation. Be assured of this that what with all thy labour and diligence thou canst not understand, thou needest not ; and that what is needful is plain and obvious, and thou mayest easily understand.

The Scripture is obscure : but hath not God offered us sufficient helps for the unfolding of it ? Have you not the promise of his spirit to illuminate you ? 1 Cor. ii. 10.

Nay, have we not the Scripture itself, which is the best interpreter of its own meaning ? Usually, if it speak more darkly in one place, it

speaks the same truth more clear in another : compare Scripture with Scripture, and you will find it holds a light unto itself, &c.

Others may say, they are doubtful, because they see many of those, who have been most conversant in the Scripture, perverted and carried aside into damnable errors, and yet have still pleaded Scripture for the defence of them.—To say that, therefore, we must not read the Scripture, because some wrest it to their own destruction, is alike reasonable as to say, that therefore we must not eat nor drink because some eat to gluttony and to madness. , The Apostle St. Peter tells us, 2 Epist. c. iii. v. 16, that, in St. Paul's Epistles, there were some things hard to be understood which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures unto their own destruction : shall we, therefore, conclude, that neither his Epistle nor any other of the Scriptures should be read by us, because that, in some, instead of nourishment, they have occasioned only wind, flatulency, and ill-humours ? If this had been his purpose, it had been very easy for him to have said, ' Because they are hard to be understood, and many wrest them to their own destruction, beware that you read them not : ' but instead of this, he draws another inference, (v. 17. 18) ; he saith not, ' Beware you read them not, ' but ' Beware how you read them. ' This is the true apostolical caution, which tends not to drive us from the

Scriptures, but to make us more studious and inquisitive in them.—And this the primitive parents thought the best and surest means to preserve their people from error and seduction : it were almost endless to recite to you those many passages, wherein they do most pathetically exhort all, of all ranks and conditions, of each sex, of all ages, to a diligent perusal of the Holy Scriptures. Their exhortations were scarce more vehement and earnest in any thing, than that the people would employ their time and thoughts in revolving them.

Sure, (says the Bishop, in conclusion,) the wresting of the Scriptures by some who read them, cannot occasion the destruction of more, than that damnable idolatry and those damnable heresies have done, which have been brought into and are generally owned and practised by the Church of Rome through the not reading them.

On the Use of the Holy Scriptures, vol. iv. p. 203, *Pratt's Edition* (Christian Observer.)

THOMAS CRANMER.

First Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury ; was born in Nottinghamshire, 1489—suffered martyrdom, 1556.

But now to let pass custome, and to weigh, as wise men ever should, the thing in his own nature. Let us here discuss, what it availeth Scripture to bee had and read of the lay and vulgar people. And to this question I intend

here to say nothing but that was spoken and written by the noble doctor and most moral divine St. John Chrysostome, in his third sermon *De Lazaro*; albeit I wil be something shorter, and gather the matter into fewer words, and less room then he doth there, because I would not bee tedious. He exhorteth there his audience, “that every man should read by himself at home in the mean dayes and time, between sermon and sermon, to the intent they might both more profoundly fix in their minds and memories that hee had said before upon such texts, whereupon he had already preached; and also that they might have their minds the more ready and better prepared to recieve and percieve that which he should say from henceforth in his sermons, upon such texts as hee had not yet declared and preached upon.”*

“What sayest thou, man?” saith hee; “is it not for thee to study and to read the Scriptures, because thou art encumbred and distract with cares and bussiness? So much the more is it behooffull for thee to have defence of Scriptures, how much the more distressed in worldly dangers.” “Thy wife provoketh thee to anger; thy child giveth thee occasion to take sorrow and pensiveness; thine enemies ly in wait for thee; thy friend, as thou takest him, sometime

* A considerable part of Cranmer's quotation from Chrysostom is omitted.

envieth thee ; thy neighbour misreporteth thee, or piketh quarrels against thee, thy mate or partner undermineth thee ; thy lord, judge, or justice threatneth thee ; poverty is painful unto thee ; the loss of thy dear and wel-beloved causeth thee to mourn ; prosperity exalteth thee ; adversity bringeth thee low ; briefly, so divers and so manifold occasions of cares, tribulations and temptations, beset thee and beseige thee round about. Where canst thou have armour, or fortress, against thine assaults ? Where canst thou have salves for thy sores, but of Holy Scripture ?”

“ Wherefore let us not stick to buy and provide us the Bible, that is to say, the books of Holy Scripture, and let us think that to bee a better jewel in our house, then either gold or silver. For like as theives bee loth to assault an house, where they know to bee good armour and artillery, so wheresoever these holy and ghostly books be occupied, there neither the devil, nor none of his angels dare come neer. And they that occupy them bee in much safeguard, and have a great consolation, and be the readier unto all goodness, the slower unto all evil. And if they have done any thing amiss, anon, even by the sight of the books, their consciences bee admonished, and they wax sorry and ashamed of the fact. Peradventure they will say unto me, how and if wee understand not that wee read, that is contained in the books ?

what then? Suppose then thou understand not the deep and profound mysteries of Scripture, yet can it not bee, but that much fruit and holiness must come and grow unto thee by the reading. For it cannot bee, that thou shouldest bee ignorant in all things alike. For the Holy Ghost hath so ordered and attempered the Scriptures, that in them, as wel publicans, fishers, and shepherds may find their edification, as great doctors their erudition." "But still ye wil say, I cannot understand it. What mervail? How shouldest thou understand if thou wilt not read nor look upon it. Take the books into thine hands, read the whole story, and that thou understandest, keep it well in memory: that thou understandest not, read it again and again. If thou can neither so come by it, counsail with some other that is better learned. Go to thy curate and preacher, shew thyself to bee desirous to know and learn. And I doubt not but God seeing thy diligence and readiness, if no man else teach thee, wil himself vouchsafe with his Holy Spirit to illuminate thee, and to open unto thee that which was locked from thee?" "All these things bee written for us, for our edification and amendment, which bee born towards the latter end of the world. The reading of the Scriptures is a great and strong bulwark or fortress against sin; the ignorance of the same is a greater ruine and destruction of them that wil not know it. That is the thing that bringeth in heresie; that is it that causeth all corrupt and per-

verse living ; that is it, that bringeth all things out of good order ?” Hitherto all that I have said, I have taken and gathered out of the fore-said sermon of this holy doctor St. John Chrysostom. Now if I should in like manner bring what the self-same doctor speaketh in other places, and what other doctors and writers say concerning the same purpose, I might seem to you to write another Bible, rather than to make a preface to the Bible. Wherefore in few words to comprehend the largeness and utility of the Scripture, how it containeth fruitful instruction and erudition for every man : if any thing be necessary to be learned of the Holy Scripture we may learn it. If falsehood should be re-proved, thereof wee may gather wherewithal. If any thing bee to bee corrected and amended ; if there need any exhortation or consolation, of the Scripture wee may wel learn. In the ~~Scriptures~~ be the fat pastures of the soul ; therein is no venomous meat, no unwholesome thing : they be the very dainty and pure feeding. Hee that is ignorant shal find there what he should learn. Hee that is a perverse sinner shal find there his damnation to make him to tremble for fear. Hee that laboureth to serve God shal find there his glory, and the promissions of eternal life, exhorting him more diligently to labour. Herein may princes learn how to govern their subjects ; subjects, obedience, love, and dread to their princes ; husbands how they should behave them unto their wives, how to educate

their children and servants ; and contrary, the wives, children, and servants may know their dutie to their husbands, parents, and masters. Here may al manner of persons, men, women, young, old, learned, unlearned, rich, poor, priests, laymen, lords, ladies, officers, tenants, and mean men, virgins, wives, widowes, lawiers, merchants, artificers, husbandmen ; and al manner of persons of what estate or condition soever they bee, may in this book learn all things what they ought to believe, what they ought to do, as wel concerning Almighty God, as also concerning themselves and al other. Briefly, to the reading of the Scripture none can bee enemy, but that either be so sick that they love not to hear of any medicine ; or else that bee so ignorant, that they know not Scripture to bee the most healthful medicines.

Therefore as touching this former part, I wil here conclude, and take it for conclusion, sufficiently determined and appoynted, that it is convenient and good the Scriptures bee read of al sorts and kinds of people, and in the vulgar tongue, without further allegations and probations for the same ; which shall not need, since that this one place of John Chrysostome is enough, and sufficient to persuade al them that bee not frowardly and perversely set in their own wilful opinions.

Preface to the H. Bible in Strype's Appendix to his Memorials of that Reformer, p. 242. (Christian Observer.)

ST. AMBROSE.

One of the most eminent fathers of the church ; was born at Arles, in France, about A.D. 336—died at Milan, 397.

Take to yourselves as counsellors Moses, Esaias, Jeremiah, Peter, Paul, John, and even the great counsellor himself, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that you may gain the Father. With these you must treat, with these confer, meditate upon these the whole day.

Sermon on Psalm 118. (J——.)

We justly damne all newe things, which Christ did not teach, because Christ is the way of the faithfull.

Things that we finde not in the Scripture, we may use as we please.

De primo officiorum. (Craig.)

ANSELM, ABP. OF CANTERBURY.

A native of Italy ; was born in 1033 at Aost or Augusta, a town at the foot of the Alps—died at Canterbury, 1109.

They (the Scriptures) are able to make thee sufficiently learned to obtaine eternall salvation.

Opera, tom. ii, p. 121. (Birckbek, p. 239.)

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS.

Commonly called the angelical Doctor ; was born in the castle of Aquina, about the year 1224.

The Scriptures doe not qualifie a man after

an ordinarie sort, but they perfit him, so that nothing is wanting to make him happy.

In Tim. 3, in tom. 16. (Birckbek 2, p. 45.)

ST. ATHANASIUS.

An eminent father of the Christian church, of the fourth century; was born at Alexandria, of heathen parents—died in the year 373, after having been bishop 46 years.

The Holy Scriptures, given by inspiration of God, are of themselves sufficient to the discoverie of truth.

Orat. I. cont. Gent. tom. 1. (Birckbek, p. 72.)

ST. AUGUSTINE,

Or contracted, St. Austin D. Aurelius, an eminent father of the church; was born at Tagasta, Nov. 13, 354—died of a fever, 28th August, 430, at Hippo, while that city was besieged by the Vandals. Such was the popularity of St. Augustine, that Panzer enumerates no less than 176 editions of various parts of his works before 1500.

In those things which are layd downe plainely in the Scriptures, all those things are found, which appertaine to faith and direction of life.

De Doctrini Christiana, li. 2, c.
9, tom. 3. (Birckbek, p. 112.)

Those things which seemed sufficient to the salvation of believers, were chosen to bee written.

Opera 9, sup. Johan. tract. 49. (Birckbek, p. 112.)

This reverence and honour have I learnt to give to those bookes of Scripture onely, which are called canonicall, that I most firmly believe none of their authors could any whit erre in writing. But others I so read, that with how great sanctity and learning soever they doe excell, I therefore thinke not any thing to be true, because they so thought it; but because they were able to perswade me, either by those canonicall authours, or by some probable reason, that it did not swerve from truth.

August. Epist. 19. (Birckbek, p. 156.)

(The city of God) believes also in the Holy Scriptures, both Old and New, which we call canonical, whence that faith is conceived by which the just live, which certain and apart, concerning some things which we have not perceived by sense or reason, nor are clear to us by canonical Scripture, nor have come to our knowledge by witnesses whom it would be absurd not to believe, we without just reprehension doubt.

De Civitatis Dei, xix. 18. (J——.)

God having spoken first by the prophets, then by himself, afterwards by the apostles as much as he judged sufficient, also founded the Scripture of the most eminent authority, to which we attach our faith respecting those things which it does not become us to be igno-

rant of, and which of ourselves we are unable to know.

Idem, xi. 3.

From the mouth of truth I acknowledge Christ, the truth itself; from the mouth of truth I acknowledge the church, the partaker of truth.

Psalm 57.

Who is ignorant that the holy canonical Scripture, as well of the Old as the New Testament, is contained in its proper limits; and that it so far goes before all later epistles of bishops, that it cannot be in any manner disputed, or enquired whether or not any thing written therein be true or right? But the letters of bishops, which, after the confirmation of the canon, have been, or are written, may be reprehended by the wiser discourse of some one more skilled in the matter, by the more weighty authority of other bishops, by the prudence of wiser men, and by councils, if it should happen that the truth has been deviated from. And councils themselves which are held in separate countries or provinces, without the slightest doubt, yield to the authority of plenary councils, and these themselves may be amended, the former by the latter, when by any proof that which was shut is opened, and that which was

hidden is discovered; and this, without any mark of sacrilegious pride, without any inflated neck of arrogance, without any conflict of malicious envy, but, with holy humility, with catholic peace, with Christian charity.

De Baptist con. Donatist.

I am bound to give consent onely to canonical Scriptures, without any excuse.

De Natura et Gratia, 61. (Craig.)

ST. BASIL,

Surnamed the Great, from his learning and piety; was born at Cæsarea in Cappadocia, in 326—died 379.

The Scripture is a perfect rule and line, and admitteth no addition.

Epist. 8. (Craig.)

Let us stand to the judgement of the Scriptures, inspired by God, and let the sentence of truth be given to them, whose doctrine is agreeable to the Heavenly Oracles.

Idem. (Craig.)

It is pride to reject any thing the apostles have written, or, to adde any thing to their writings, and bring in things not written.

De vera fide. (Craig.)

It is a manifest falling from the faith, and an argument of arrogancie, either to reject any

point of those things that are written, or to bring in any of those things that are not written.

De fide inter Ascetica, tom. 2. (Birckbek, p. 73.)

VENERABLE BEDE.

A name bestowed upon him from his great talents and virtue ; was the brightest ornament of the eighth century ; born in the year 672—died 735.

(The successors of Columb Kille the great Saint of Ireland,) observed only those works of pietie and chastitie, which they could learn in the prophetically, evangelically, and apostolically writings.

Beda, lib. 3, *Hist. cap.* 4. (Birckbek, p. 175.)

SAINT BERNARD.

One of the most distinguished of the twelfth century ; was born at Fountaine in Burgundy, 1091—died 1153.

Neither was the Commander ignorant, that the weight of the commandement exceeded mans strength, but he judged it to be profitable, thereby to put them in mind of their owne insufficiencie, so that God by commanding things impossible (to us) did not thereby make man a transgressour, but humbled him to the intent that we receiving the law, and feeling our own wants, might call to heaven, and the Lord might help us.

Sup. Cant. ser. 50, (Birckbek, 2, p. 27.)

God hath therefore commanded his precepts

to be observed exceedingly, or to the full, that we beholding our imperfection, and falling short, and finding that we are unable to fulfill that which we ought, may fly to his mercy.

Serm. 2 vigil. natu. Dom. (Birckbek, 2, p. 28.)

A just man, by the testimonie of the Holy Spirit within him may be assured of grace.

Idem. (id. 2, p. 28.)

Dangerous is the dwelling of them that trust in their owne merits; dangerous, because ruinous.

In Psalm qui habitat serm. 1, (id. 2, p. 28)

The Word of God is all in all.

De Utilitate verbi Dei. (id. 2, p. 28.)

JOHN FIDAUZA BONAVENTURA.

A celebrated Doctor, Cardinal and Saint of the Church of Rome; was born at Ragnarea in Tuscany, 1222—died 1274.

The benefit of Scriptures is not ordinarie: but such as is able to make a man fully blessed and happy.

In Breviloq. sect. 3, tom. 6. (Birckbek, 2, p. 45.)

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOMUS.

One of the most eminent Fathers of the Church; was born at Antioch about the year 354—died 407.

In no way can the true Church of Christ be knowne, but by the Scripture onely.

Opere imperfecto, Homil. 49, (Craig.)

We should in no case give credit to the Church except they speake and do the things, that are contained in the Scriptures.

Idem, p. 49. (Craig.)

If anything be obtended without the Gospell, under the title of the Spirite, let us not believe it.

In Sancto et adorando Spiritu. (Craig.)

All those things that are in holy writ are right and cleere: whatsoever is necessarie, is manifest therein; yea, (he calleth the) Scripture the most exact balance, square, and rule of divine veritie.

In 2 Epist. ad Thess. tom. 4, edit. Savilii. p. 234. (Birckbek, p. 113.)

CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS.

Titus Flavius Alexandrinus Clemens, an eminent father of the church in the second and third centuries.

Those who are willing to employ themselves, in the most excellent things, will never give over the search of truth, till they have received a demonstration from the Scriptures themselves.

Stromata. B. 7. (J——.)

They must necessarily be deceived in the greatest things who undertake them, unless they hold fast the rule of truth, which they received from truth itself.

Id. ib. (J——.)

Whatever is judged is not believed till it be judged, therefore that can be no principle which stands in need of being judged. Justly therefore when we have received by faith that indemonstrable principle, and from the principle itself used demonstrating concerning itself, we are by the voice of the Lord instructed in the knowledge of truth.

Id. (J——.)

CLEMENT OF ROME.

Supposed to have been a native of Rome, and companion and fellow labourer of St. Paul.

Look into the Holy Scriptures, which are the true words of the Holy Ghost. Ye know that there is nothing unjust or counterfeit written in them. There you shall not find that righteous men were ever cast off by such as were good themselves : they were persecuted, 'tis true, but it was by the wicked and unjust : they were cast into prison ; but they were cast in by those that were unholy : they were stoned ; but it was by transgressors : they were killed ; but by accursed men, and such as had taken up an unjust envy against them : and all these things they underwent gloriously. For what shall we say, brethren, was Daniel cast into the den of lions by men fearing God ? Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, were they cast into the fiery furnace by men professing the excellent and glorious worship of the Most High ? God forbid ! what kind

of persons then were they that did these things? they were men abominable, full of all wickedness; who were incensed to so great a degree, as to bring those into suffering, who, with a holy and unblameable purpose of mind, worshiped God: not knowing that the Most High is the protector and defender of all such, as, with a pure conscience serve his holy name: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

From Abp. Wake's Apostolical Fathers, p. 36, see Whiston's Life, p. 226.

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

Memorable as being the first Roman Emperor who embraced Christianity; was born at Naissus a town in Dardania, 272—died 337.

Because the apostles bookes doe plainely instruct us in divine matters; therefore we ought to make our determinations upon questions, from words which are so divinely inspired.

Theodoret Eccles. Hist. li. 1, cap. 7. (Birckbek, p. 105.)

THASCIUS CÆCILIOUS CYPRIANUS.

A principal Father of the Church; was born at Carthage in Africa, about the beginning of the third century—died 258.

Out of the Scripture must come all rule of teaching.

De Baptismo Christi. (Craig.)

It does not become us to follow the custom of men, but the truth of God; since God speaks by

the prophet Esaias and says, “without cause they worship me teaching the commandments and doctrines of men.”

Cyprianus. b. xi. ep. 3. to Cæcilius (J———.)

CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA.

A celebrated Father of the Church, and Bishop of Alexandria, in the beginning of the fifth century—died 444.

All things, that our Lord did, are not written, but the apostles wrote the things they judged to be sufficient for our maners and doctrine.

Johan. lib. xii. (Craig.)

The Holy Scripture is sufficient to make them which are brought up in it wise, and most approved, and furnished with most sufficient understanding.

Cont. Julian. (Birckbek, p. 113.)

CYRIL OF JERUSALEM.

Archbishop of Jerusalem in the fourth century, successor to Maximus, 350—died 386.

With respect to the divine and sacred mysteries of faith, it is necessary, that no part of them should be handed down without authority of Holy Scriptures; nor should one be borne away by mere probabilities, or, by persuasions. Do not put your faith in me while I say these things, unless you receive demonstration from the Holy

Scriptures of what I speak ; for the very safety of our faith itself does not depend on eloquence, but upon proof of the Holy Scriptures.

14 *Catechet. Or.*

JOHN DAMASCENAS.

Or John of Damascus, surnamed Mansur, he was a learned priest or monk of the eighth century ; was born at Damascus about 676—died 760, aged 84.

Whatsoever is delivered unto us in the law, and the prophets, by the apostles and evangelists ; that wee recieve, acknowledge and reverence ; and besides these wee require nothing else.

De Orthodox. Fide, lib. 1. cap. 1. (Birckbek, p. 203.)

ST. EPHREM OR EPHRAIM.

A Christian writer of the fourth century ; was a native of Edessa—died 378.

When you consult the Sacred Scriptures do not merely anxiously peruse them, running through superficially and passing over cursorily the things written therein, but, refuse not, if necessary, to go over the same thing twice, thrice, or more often to obtain exactitude. Nevertheless when about to read them, or, to attend to another while reading them, pray first to God, saying, “ Lord Jesus Christ open the ears and the eyes of my heart to hear thy words, to assent to them, and to perform thy will. I am a stranger upon earth, hide not thou thy

commandments from me. Open thou mine eyes, and I shall see the wonder of thy law.”

(J——).

JOHN GERSON.

An illustrious French divine, sometimes called Charlier; was born at Gerson in France, 1363—died in a convent at Lyons, 1429.

The Scriptures is given unto us, as a sufficient and infallible rule, for the government of the whole body of the church, and each part thereof unto the end of the world.

De Protest. Ecclesiast. Considerat.
13. part 1, *oper.* (Birckbek, 2, p. 120.)

What evill hath followed upon the contempt of Holy Scripture, which doubtlesse is sufficient for the government of the church, for otherwise Christ had beene an unperfect law giver, experience will teach.

Serm. in die Circumscis. Concid. 1, part 1. (Birckbek, 2, p. 121.)

ST. GREGORY.

Surnamed the Great, an illustrious Pope; was born at Rome, of a patrician family, about A. D. 544, became bishop of that city 590—died 604.

The minds of the just look upon this Scripture as the mouth of God.

On Job. c. 23. (J——.)

He who addresses himself to the words of true preaching must necessarily take the origin of

causes from the sacred pages, that he may call back every thing he says to the foundation divine authority.

Id. (J——.)

Whatsoever serveth for edification, is contain'd in the volume of the Scriptures; wherein are all resolutions of doubts fully and plentifully to be found; they being like a full spring, that cannot be drawne drye.

In Ezechiel, li. 1, Hom. 9, tom. 2, *et in Cant.* cap. 5. (Birckbek, p. 186.)

They (the Scriptures) bee as it were God's letter or epistle to his creature, wherein he reveales his whole minde to him.

Id. lib. 4, ep. 40. (Birckbek, p. 186.)

The Scriptures are like a river, wherein there are as well shallow foords for lambes to wade in, as depths for the elephant to swim in.

Epist. in Leand. cap. 4, *Præfat. in Job.* to. 1. (Birckbek. p. 186.)

GREGORY NYSSEN.

Bishop of Nyssa, and younger brother of Basil the Great; was born at Cappadocia, 331—died 396.

(Saith) That in that onely the truth must be acknowledged, wherein the seale of Scripture testimonie is to be seene.

De Anima et Resurrect. (Birckbek, p. 73.)

(The Scriptures are) an even, streight, and inflexible rule ;

De Anima et Resurrect. tom. 2. (Birckbek, p. 73.)

ST. JEROME OR HIERONYMUS.

A very distinguished Father of the Church ; was born of Christian parents at Striden, on the confines of Pannonia and Dalmatia, in the year 331—died 422.

Whatever is asserted by us, is to be asserted by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, in which to those who believe, God speaks daily.

Ad Ctesiphonta. (J——.)

Take heed what they say that were, and not that are now : for whatsoever thing is spoken without the doctrine of the apostles, let it be put away, and have no authoritie.

Psalm 86. (Craig.)

The worde is God's sworde, wherewith all these things are cutt off, which without the testimonie and authoritie of the Scriptures men of their owne head do invent and faine as traditions of the apostles.

In Aggæum. (Craig.)

HILARIUS OR HILARY.

Bishop of Poitiers, an ancient Father of the Christian Church, and powerful enemy of the Arians, flourished in the fourth century—died 368.

The faith to be ordered onely according to those things that be written :

De Trinit. lib. 2. (Birckbek, p. 72.)

The word of God did suffice the beleevers ;
(yea,) what is there concerning man's salvation,
that is not conteined in the word of the Evan-
gelist ? what wants it, what obscuritie is there in
it ? all things there are full and perfect.

Id. ibid, lib. 11. (Idem, p. 72.)

IGNATIUS.

Surnamed Theophorus, one of the apostolical Fathers of
the Church ; was born in Syria, educated under the Apostle and
Evangelist St. John, ordained Bishop of Antioch, about A.D.
67, in which see he continued 40 years ; suffered martyrdom
at Rome, in the year 107.

The gospel is the perfection of incorruption.

Ep. to the Philadelphians. (J——.)

JOHN OF VESALIA.

A Doctor and Preacher at Worms, of the fifteenth century.

(Held that) The best interpreters of the
Scriptures expound one place by another, (be-
cause men obtaine not the Spirit of Christ, but
by the Spirit of Christ. That the doctors, be
they never so holy, are not to be beleaved for
themselves, and) the glosse as little, (that,) the
elect are saved onely by the mercie of God,
(that,) popes' indulgencies, auricular confession,
and pilgrimages to Rome are vaine.

Paraleipom. Abbatis Urspergens. (Birckbek, 2, p. 114.)

ST. IRENÆUS.

Bishop of Lyons in France, about the end of the second century, was by birth a Greek, and probably born in or near the city of Smyrna ; suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Severus.

The Scriptures are perfect, as spoken from the Word of God, and his Spirit :

Adversus Hæreses, lib. 2. c. 47. (Birckbek, p. 48.)

Erasmus observes, that Irenæus fought against the troupes of Heretikes, onely by the forces and strength of Scripture ; indeed he sometimes chargeth them with the churches' tradition.

Erasmus præfat. in Iren. (Birckbek, p. 48.)

For we have not known the disposition of our salvation by others than by those by whom the Gospel came to us, which they then first preached, and after, by the Will of God delivered to us in writings to be the foundation and pillar of our faith.

Idem, b. iii. c. 1. (J——.)

The heretikes when they are rebuked by the Scriptures, they turne to the accusations of the Scriptures as if they were corrupt, or had not authoritie, and that they are spoken sundrie waies, and that the truth cannot be found by them if we want the tradition.

Idem, lib. 3. cap. 2. (J——.)

ST. ISIDORE OF SEVILLE.

Was born at Carthage, in Spain, about the beginning of the seventh century—died 636.

The householder bringing forth from his treasure, things old and new, signifies, Christ bringing forth of his unsearchable wisdom, the two Testaments, the Old in which earthly happiness is promised, and the New, through which we hope for the kingdom of heaven.

Alleg. Sa. Sanct. (J——.)

We have as a guide to the knowledge of Christ, the law ; as witnesses, the prophets.

De Nativ. Domini, l. 1. (J——.)

JUSTIN MARTYR.

One of the earliest writers of the Christian Church ; was born at Neapolis, the ancient Sichem of Palestine, in the province of Samaria, suffered martyrdom about the year 165.

There have been, a long time since, several persons much elder than the reputed philosophers, blessed men, just, and lovers of God, speaking by the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, foretelling things which have come to pass since, whom they call prophets. These only saw the truth and declared it to men ; neither flattering nor fearing any, nor conquered with the love of honour ; but they only spake the things which they heard, and saw, being filled with the Holy Spirit. Whose books are still extant, which whosoever reads, and assents to, will find himself

much improved, in the principles and ends of things, and, whatsoever becomes a philosopher to know. For they write, not by way of argument or demonstration, but that which is above it, they are most faithful witnesses of truth. For the things which have, and do come to pass, do enforce men to believe the truth of what they spake. And not only so, but they are most worthy to be believed for the miracles which they wrought. Moreover, they extol the Maker of the world, God and the Father, and declare to the world his Son Christ: which the false prophets who are acted by an impure spirit, neither have done nor yet do; but they attempt to shew some tricks, for the amazement of men, and cry up the evil and deceiving spirits. But, do thou of all things pray, that the gates of life may be opened to thee, for these things are not seen, nor understood by all, but only of them to whom God and Christ shall grant the knowledge of them.

Dial. cum Tryphone Jud. (Stillington's rational account of the grounds of the Protestant Religion, p. 264.)

LACTANTIUS.

Lucius Coelius Firmianus Lactantius, the most eloquent of the Latin Christian fathers, flourished in the early part of the fourth century under Dioclesian and Constantine the Great.

Holy writ teaches us that the thoughts of philosophers are folly, that this doctrine ought to be established by acts as well as proofs; lest

any one deceived by the specious name of wisdom, or led aside by the splendor of vain eloquence, should delight to place faith in human things more than divine; that is to say, to obey reason rather than revelation.

Lactantius Justit. lib. 3. cap. 1. from Huets' Essay concerning the Weakness of the Human Understanding, trans. by E. Combe. 8vo. London 1725. p. 15.

NICHOLAS DE LYRA, OR LYRANUS.

(A converted Jew) so called from the place of his nativity, a small town in Normandy, was a celebrated Franciscan in the fourteenth century—died 1340.

Moses he taught morality, and what was our duty to doe; the prophets taught mysteries, and what we are to beleeeve; and these are sufficient for our salvation, and therefore it follows, Heare them.

In Lucæ. cap. 16, v. 29. (Birckbek, 2, p. 87.)

Nowe that I have by God's helpe written upon the canonicall bookes of Holy Scripture, beginning at Genesis and so going on to the end; trusting to the helpe of the same God, I intend to write upon those other bookes that are not canonicall; these bookes which are not canonicall, are received by the church, and read in the same for the information of manners, yet is their authority thought to be weake to prove things that are in controversie.

Præfat. exposit. in Tobiam. (Birckbek, 2, p. 87.)

WILLIAM OF OCKHAM, OR HOCCHAM.

So called from the village of Ockham in Surrey, where he was born; he was a celebrated leader of the scholastic doctrines—died at Munich, 1347.

Onely those verities are to be esteemed Catholike, and such as are necessarily to be beleeved for the attaining of salvation, which either expressly are delivered in Scripture, or by necessary consequence may be inferred from things so expressed.

Dialogue, part 1, lib. 2, cap. 10. (Birckbek, 2, p. 87.)

OCUMENIUS.

Bishop of Trica, in Thessaly—died about A.D. 990.

The man of God may bee not onely partaker but perfect and compleate by the doctrine of the Scripture.

(Birckbek, p. 239.)

ORIGEN.

An illustrious father of the Church, surnamed Adamantus, from his indefatigable assiduity in labour, and his irresistible firmness under the sharpest persecutions; was born at Alexandria in Egypt, about the year 185—died at Tyre in 254.

Every word that appertaineth to God may bee required and discussed; and all knowledge of things out of them may be understood: but if any thing doe remaine, which the Holy Scripture doth not determine; no other third Scripture ought to be received for to authorize any knowledge.

In Levit. Homil. 5 tom. 1. (Birckbek, p. 59.)

JUSTUS ORGELITANUS,

One of the Fathers of the Church in the sixth century,

(Compares the Scriptures) to Davids Tower wherein hang a thousand shields, and all the targets of the strong men; it being furnished with all sorts of armour, to encounter Satan, and his Instruments withall.

In Cap. 4, Cantic. (Birckbek, p. 175.)

RADULPHUS FLAVIACENSIS.

A learned Monk who flourished in the tenth century.

The Scripture is like to a well furnished table, or ordinarie. It is our spiritual refection, and cordiall given to us against the heart-qualmes of our enemies.

In Levit. li. 17, cap. 5. (Birckbek, p. 228.)

CLAUDIUS CLEMENS SCOTUS.

Born in Ireland; was one of the founders of the University of Paris in the ninth century.

Men therefore erre, because they know not the Scriptures; and because they are ignorant thereof, they consequently know not Christ, who is the power and wisdom of God.

In Math. li. 3. (Birckbek, p. 216.)

JOHN DUNS, OR SCOTUS.

An eminent Scholastic Divine, and one of the most celebrated characters of his day; was born in Scotland, probably at Dunse, and flourished in the latter end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries—died at Cologne in 1308.

Supernaturall knowledge, as much as is ne-

cessarie for a wayfaring man, is sufficiently delivered in Sacred Scripture.

Sent. prolog. quæst. secund. (Birckbek, 2, p. 45.)

SYRUS TATIAN.

A writer of the Primitive Church who flourished about
A.D. 150.

After I had abundantly discovered the vanity of the theology and superstitions of the Greeks, I fell to the reading of some strange books much elder and more divine than the writings of the Greek philosophers. And to these I yielded up my faith, from the great simplicity, and plainness of the style, and the freedom from affectation that was in the writers, and that evidence, and perspicuity, which was in all they writ ; and because they foretold things to come, made excellent promises, and manifestly declared the monarchy of the world.

*Stillingfleet's Rational Account of the
ground of the Protestant Religion.*

VINCENTIUS LIRINENSIS.

A pious Monk of the fifth century, was a native of France,
and originally a soldier.

The Canon or Rule of Scripture is perfect, abundantly sufficient in itselfe for all things, yea, more than sufficient.

Contra Hæres. cap. 2. (Birckbek, p. 112.)

GEORGE BERKELEY, BP. OF CLOYNE.

An ingenious Philosopher ; was born 1684—died 1753.

If I durst follow my own judgment, I should be apt to think there are noble beauties in the style of the Holy Scripture: in the narrative parts a strain so simple and unaffected ; in the devotional and prophetic, so animated and sublime ; and in the doctrinal parts, such an air of dignity and authority as seems to speak their original divine.

Minute Philosopher. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

RICHARD KIDDER,

BISHOP OF BATH AND WELLS.

A very learned Divine—died 1703.

Whoever looks into the laws of the Gospel may soon discern that it is a blessed institution. It is full of weighty principles, of divine and heavenly precepts, of the most endearing and pathetic motives to obedience. It hath nothing trifling in it, but is fraught with a wisdom that is divine ; and is placed above the contempt and scorn of men. It commends itself to the consciences of all that are ingenuous and inquisitive, and no man will speak evil of it, but a fool that understands it not, or the debauched sinner who is condemned by its precepts, and denounced against by its severest menaces.

Demonstration of the Messias. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

GEORGE STANHOPE,

DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

A divine of eminent talents and personal worth ; was born in the county of Derby, 1660—died 1728.

Welcome this holy religion, this blest and powerful book, to us dark, wretched mortals : a book pure and clear as the place it came from ; wise and good, like the Spirit of him that formed it. And may this invaluable book be ever first and best in our esteem, most in our thoughts, our studies and desires. May it be entirely writ and fairly copied in our memories and hearts, and shine bright in all our conversation. For this divine volume will sanctify our studies, enlarge our understandings, refine and exalt our souls, and teach us to excel others, and even daily to excel ourselves. In much of all other knowledge there is much sorrow ; but this will make us wise with pleasure and safety ; not only wiser for this world but for heaven and eternal salvation.

Perfection and usefulness of Scriptures. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

REV. JONATHAN SWIFT, D.D.

Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, an illustrious English classical writer ; was born in Ireland, 1667—died 1745.

The system of morality to be gathered out of the writings or sayings of the heathen philosophers, falls undoubtedly very short of that delivered in the Gospel, and wants, besides, the

divine sanction which our Saviour gave to his.— But I am deceived, if a better comment could be any where collected upon the moral part of the Gospel, than from the writings of these excellent men.

Letter to a young clergyman. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.

An eminent statesman in the time of Queen Elizabeth; was born at Chiselhurst in Kent, 1536—died 1590.

Ah! my friends, while we laugh, all things are serious round about us: God is serious, who exerciseth patience towards us; Christ is serious, who shed his blood for us; the Holy Ghost is serious, who striveth against the obstinacy of our hearts; the Holy Scriptures bring to our ears the most serious and important things in the whole world; the holy sacraments represent the most serious and awful matters; the whole creation is serious in serving God and us; all that are in heaven and hell are serious; how then can a man, that hath one foot in the grave, jest and laugh?

Woodward's Fair Warnings.

REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

Founder of the Calvinistic Methodists; was born at Gloucester, 1714—died 1770.

Christ is the treasure hid in the field, both of the Old and New Testament. In the Old, you

will find him under prophecies, types, sacrifices, and shadows; in the New, manifested in the flesh, to become a propitiation for our sins as a priest, and as a prophet to reveal the whole will of his heavenly Father.—Search therefore the Scriptures; taste and see how good the word of God is, and then you will never leave that heavenly manna, that angels' food, to feed on dry husks, that light bread, those trifling, sinful compositions, in which men of false taste delight themselves: no; you will then disdain such poor entertainment; and the word of God will then be sweeter to you than honey and the honey-comb, and dearer than gold and silver.—In the 46th psalm I know not which to admire most, the piety, or the poetry; the matter, or the manner; and I believe I may venture to defy all the critics on earth to shew me any composition of Pindar, or Horace, that any way comes up to the diction of it, considered only as human.

Sermons; passim. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

REV. JOHN WESLEY.

The celebrated founder of the sectary of Methodists; was born at Epworth, in Lincolnshire, 1703—died 1791.

The word of the living God, which directed the first patriarchs also, was, in the time of Moses, committed to writing. To this were added in several succeeding generations, the inspired writings of the other prophets. After-

wards, what the Son of God preached, and the Holy Ghost spake by the apostles, the apostles and evangelists wrote. This is what we now style the Holy Scripture: this is that word of God which remaineth for ever: of which, "tho' heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle shall not pass away." The Scripture therefore of the Old and New Testament, is a most solid and precious system of divine truth. Every part thereof is worthy of God; and all together are one entire body, wherein is no defect, no excess. It is the fountain of heavenly wisdom, which they who are able to taste, prefer to all writings of men, however wise, or learned, or holy.

An exact knowledge of the truth was accompanied in the inspired writers with an exactly regular series of arguments, a precise expression of their meaning, and a genuine vigour of suitable affections.

In the language of the Sacred Writings, we may observe the utmost depth together with the utmost ease. All the elegancies of human composures sink into nothing before it; God speaks not as man, but as God. His thoughts are very deep; and thence his words are of inexhaustible virtue. And the language of his messengers also is exact in the highest degree: for the words which were given them, accurately answered the impression made upon their minds: and hence Luther says, Divinity is nothing but

a grammar of the language of the Holy Ghost. To understand this thoroughly, we should observe the emphasis which lies on every word, the holy affections expressed thereby, and the tempers shewn by every writer.

Preface to his New Testament. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

REV. MATTHEW POOLE.

A learned Nonconformist; was born at York, 1624—died in Holland, 1679.

Every reasonable man finds the Holy Scriptures of so venerable antiquity, and discerneth in them such stamps of divinity, in the majesty of their style, the purity of the matter, the sublimeness and spirituality of the propositions contained in them, the self-denial of the penmen, the heavenliness of the scope, and the end of those Sacred Writings, the harmony of the parts, the seal of miracles, and principally in the mighty power and efficacy of them upon the souls and consciences of multitudes, both for conviction, and for support, and consolation, that he easily concludes, "this is the voice of God and not of man."

Preface to Annotations on the Bible. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

PAUL DE THOYRAS RAPIN.

A celebrated historian; was born at Castras, in Languedoc, 1661—died 1725.

Even that sublime manner which Longinus has framed, by heaping together all the great

expressions of the ancients, is but low and creeping in comparison with that which a preacher ought to follow, if he should truly reach and maintain his character; that exalted mien which becomes the greatness of Christianity, and the incomprehensible mysteries of faith, can only be represented by those divine images which occur in the Holy Scriptures, to all such as have the true gift of searching its depths. It is only in this pure and fruitful stream, that a preacher can find those magnificent expressions, which have the Holy Spirit for their author: 'tis hence he must take those bright ideas, and that true sublimity, which compose the essential character of the oratory of the temple, such as recommended Apollos to the approbation of St. Paul, and to the honour of being his fellow-labourer, as an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures. A preacher then, who would attain the eloquence peculiar to his functions must be constant and assiduous in reading the prophets, and must allow himself time to meditate on what he reads; especially if he is desirous of exciting terror, which he will almost perpetually have occasion to do. For we are not skilled in the art of preaching, unless we can alarm the conscience of a sinner, and by casting proper fears into his spirit, can awaken him out of that slumber which was brought upon him by the softness of a licentious age. The Holy Scrip-

ture is so plentiful a fountain of all the riches, and all the ornaments of eloquence, as to afford a proper model for every way, and every style. Thus Isaiah is lofty, Jeremiah is pathetic. Ezekiel terrible, Daniel mild and gentle; and as for the other prophets, greatness is their general character; nor have we anything written with the like force by Pagan authors. Good sense and true reason was never displayed to so much advantage in any moral treatise, as it is in the books of Solomon.

Critical Works. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

REV. NATHANIEL LARDNER, D.D.

A learned dissenting clergyman; was born in Kent, 1684—
died in 1768.

The volume of the New Testament consists of several pieces. The whole is writ without affectation, with the greatest simplicity and plainness, and is confirmed by other ancient writers of unquestioned authority. The Divine Providence has all along watched over and guarded these best of books (a very fit object of an especial care) which contain the best of principles, were apparently writ with the best views, and have in them inimitable characters of truth and simplicity.

Credibility of the Gospel History. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

REV. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL.D.

A distinguished dissenting divine and philosopher ; was born near Leeds, 1733—died 1804.

It appears to me, that we must either admit the truth of the Gospel history, which contains an account of the doctrine, miracles, death and resurrection of Christ, (on which the belief of a future life depends) or believe what is infinitely more incredible, *viz.*, that several thousand people, present at the transactions and who had no motive to believe them without sufficient evidence, but every motive to turn their eyes from them, or disbelieve them if they could, should yet without such evidence, have given the firmest assent to them, and have entertained so little doubt of the extraordinary facts, as to maintain their faith in them at the hazard of every thing dear to them in life, and even cheerfully lay down their lives, rather than abandon their faith. Let philosophers, as such, account for this great fact, without admitting more real miracles, and those of a more extraordinary kind, than the belief of Christianity requires of me, and I will relinquish my present faith, dear as it is to me, and join in exposing it. As philosophers, the question between us is, whose faith, strictly speaking, is more agreeable to present appearances? Whatever we may think of an author of nature, and of his attention to it, we equally believe in the uni-

formity of the laws of nature, and that man, whose constitution is a part of the system of nature, was the same kind of being two thousand years ago that he is now; as much as that a horse of that age, or an oak tree of that age, had the same properties with the horses and oaks of the present. Consequently, whatever was possible with respect to man, in any former period, is equally possible now.

But will any man, who gives a moment's attention to the subject, say, that it is even possible that several thousand persons in London or Paris could be made to believe, that any man in London or Paris died and rose from the dead in their own life-time; that they should persist in this persuasion through life, without shewing any sign of insanity; that they should gain numerous proselytes to their opinion, though it subjected all who embraced it to all kinds of persecution, and even to death; and that the belief of it should establish itself against all opposition, without any person being able to detect the imposition?

Now I apprehend, that this might take place more easily in London, or in Paris, at this day, than it could have done at Jerusalem in the time of our Saviour. Human nature could not have been the same thing then that we find it to be at present, if mankind could have been so imposed upon. This I therefore think absolutely incredible, consequently, as the less difficulty of

the two, as believing a thing much less improbable, I admit the truth of the Gospel history, the admission of which makes the subsequent account of the propagation of Christianity (which all history and even the present state of things prove to be true) perfectly easy and natural. Admitting these leading facts, all the rest follow of course, and all things came to be as they are without any further miracle. But real miracles we must have somewhere, in order to account for the present state of things ; and if we must admit miracles, let them be such as have a great object, and not such as have no object at all, but only serve to puzzle and confound us.

The history of the Jews, and the books of the Old Testament, furnish many facts, which no hypothesis besides that of the divine origin of their religion can explain. Let the philosopher only admit as a postulatam, that Jews are, and always were men ; constituted as other men are, and let him not deceive himself, by considering them as beings of another species.

All I wish in this respect is, that persons who pretend to the character of philosophers, would be so throughout, and carry the same spirit into the study of history, and of human nature, that they do into their laboratories ; first assuring themselves with respect to facts, and then explaining those facts by reducing them to general principles (which from the uniformity of nature must be universally true) and I shall have

no doubt of their becoming as firm believers in Christianity as myself. They will find no other hypothesis, that can explain such appearances as they cannot deny to be real. Let philosophers now say, whether there be reason in this, or not.

I therefore take the liberty, having been led to advance thus much, to address my brother philosophers on a subject equally interesting to us as philosophers and as men. Do not disregard a question of infinite moment. Give it that degree of attention to which it is naturally entitled, and especially do not so far abandon the serious character of philosophers, as to laugh where you ought to reason. At least do this great subject, and yourselves, the justice to consider the facts, and endeavour to frame some hypothesis by which to account for them; and do not decide in half an hour, on an inquiry which well deserves the study of a great part of your lives.

If I have a stronger bias than many other persons in favour of Christianity, it is that which philosophy gives me. I view with rapture the glorious face of nature, and I admire its wonderful constitution, the laws of which are daily unfolding themselves to our view. It is little that the life of man permits us to see at present, and therefore I feel a most eager desire to renew my acquaintance with it hereafter, and to resume these enquiries with which I am so much delighted now, and which must be interrupted by

death. Could I imagine that the knowledge of nature would ever be exhausted, and that we were approaching to a termination of our enquiries, I could more contentedly shut my eyes on a scene in which nothing more was to be seen or done. But to quit the stage at present (and I believe the aspect of things will be exactly similar in any future period of our existence) without the hope of revisiting, would fill me with the deepest regret. The general, who, like Epaminondas, or Wolfe, dies in the arms of victory, dies with satisfaction ; but not so he that is cut off in the beginning of a doubtful, though promising engagement. Thus I feel on the idea of ceasing to breathe, when I have but just begun to know what it is that I breathe.

Mr. Herschell's late discoveries in, and beyond, the bounds of the solar system, the great views that he has given us of the arrangement of the stars, their revolutions, and those of the immense systems into which they are formed, are peculiarly calculated to inspire an ardent desire of seeing so great a scene a little more unfolded. Such discoveries as these, give us a higher idea of the value of our being, by raising our ideas of the system of which we are a part, and, with this, an earnest wish for the continuance of it.

Besides, civil society is but in its infancy, the world itself is but very imperfectly known to the civilized inhabitants of it, and we are but

little acquainted with the real value of those few of its productions of which we have some knowledge, and which we are only beginning to name, and to arrange. How must a citizen of the world wish to know the future progress of it!

To have no wish of this kind certainly argues a low, and ignoble, and, I will say, an unphilosophical mind. I consider all such persons, how superior soever they may be to myself in other respects, with pity and concern.

They would have unspeakably more satisfaction in their philosophical pursuits, if they carried them on with the views of things that I have. It has been justly observed, that great views indicate, and indeed constitute, great minds. What elevation of mind, then, would the prospects of the Christian add to those of the philosopher! With men of reflection this apology for my conduct will, I doubt not, be admitted as satisfactory; and till I hear better reasons than have yet been offered to me for changing my conduct, I shall continue to give my attention to my different pursuits, according to my own ideas of their respective importance; and my friends have no reason to fear that I shall neglect philosophy. It has, perhaps, but too strong charms for me. I shall endeavour, however, to keep it in its proper place, and not so much attach myself to the study of the laws which govern this world, as to lose sight of the

subserviency of this world, and of all things in it to another and a better ; in which I hope to resume these pleasing philosophical pursuits and to see, in a comprehensive view, those detached discoveries which we are now making here.

At present all our systems are in a remarkable manner unhinged by the discovery of a multiplicity of facts, to which it appears difficult, or impossible, to adjust them. We need not, however, give ourselves much concern on this account. For when a sufficient number of new facts shall be discovered (towards which every imperfect hypothesis will contribute) a more general theory will soon present itself: and perhaps to the most incurious and least sagacious eye. Thus, when able navigators have, with great labour and judgment, steered towards an undiscovered country, a common sailor, placed at the mast-head, may happen to get the first sight of the land. Let us not, however, contend about merit, but let us equally enjoy any progress we make towards succeeding in it ; and above all, let us acknowledge the guidance of that Great Being, who has put a spirit in man, “ and whose inspiration giveth him understanding.”

*Preface to Philosophical Experiments
and Observations. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)*

REV. RICHARD PRICE, D.D.

An eminent dissenting minister and political writer ; was born at Tynton in Glamorganshire, 1723—died 1791.

It is not possible, that any information should

be so important, as that which we have in the Sacred Writings. The discoveries lately made in the system of the material world are justly thought of with admiration. They bestow, indeed, new lustre and dignity on human nature. But they are of no consequence, and deserve no regard, compared with the discoveries contained in the Bible, supposing it entitled to our faith. We are here made acquainted with several facts in the scheme of the moral world, and the history of providence, which are not only wonderful, but interesting in the highest degree.

Four Dissertations. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

ROGER ASCHAM.

An illustrious English scholar, and preceptor to Queen Elizabeth ; was born in Yorkshire, about 1515—died 1568.

I never knew yet scholar, that gave himself to like, and love, and follow chiefly Plato and Aristotle in Greek, and Tully in Latin, but he proved both learned, wise, and also an honest man ; if he joined withal the true doctrine of God's Holy Bible, without the which, the other three be but fine edge-tools in a fool's or mad-man's hand.

He that will dwell in these few books only ; first, in God's Holy Bible, and then join with it Tully in Latin, Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Isocrates, and Demosthenes in Greek, must needs prove an excellent man.

The Schoolmaster. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

GILBERT BURNET.

The celebrated Bishop of Salisbury, a most voluminous writer ; was born at Edinburgh, 1643—died 1714.

The rules given in the Gospel to all orders of men, and in all the relations of life, would make all families and societies both easy and happy ; the obligation to strict justice to all others, and to an abatement of what in justice we might demand from others, by doing as we would be done by ; the rules of not only passing by and forgiving injuries, but of loving enemies, and doing good for evil ; the tenderness, as well as the extent of our charity, the measures and manner of our bounty to the poor, the modesty of deportment, the condescending gentleness, as well as the unaffected humility that are enjoined, have all such characters in them, so suited to our faculties and to human society ; to the calm of a man's mind, as well as to the comforts of his life, to fortify him against misfortunes, and to support him against the feebleness and frailties of his nature ; that he who will suffer himself to weigh all this carefully, must feel a strong disposition to believe a religion to be true, that agrees with the highest thoughts that we can have of God, and the best seeds or principles that we feel within ourselves.

Four Discourses to the Clergy.

REV. JAMES BEATTIE, LL.D.

An eminent Scotch critic and poet, and professor of philosophy and logic at Aberdeen ; was born at Laurence-Kirk, in the county of Kincardine, 1735—died 1803.

Is it bigotry to believe the sublime truths of the Gospel with full assurance of faith? I glory in such bigotry : I would not part with it for a thousand worlds : I congratulate the man who is possessed of it : for amidst all the vicissitudes and calamities of the present state, that man enjoys an inexhaustible fund of consolation, of which it is not in the power of fortune to deprive him.

There is not a book on earth so favourable to all the kind, and all the sublime affections, or so unfriendly to hatred and persecution, to tyranny, injustice, and every sort of malevolence as the Gospel. It breathes nothing throughout but mercy, benevolence, and peace.

Poetry is sublime, when it awakens in the mind any great and good affection, as piety, or patriotism. This is one of the noblest effects of the art. The Psalms are remarkable beyond all other writings, for their power of inspiring devout emotions. But it is not in this respect only that they are sublime. Of the divine nature, they contain the most magnificent descriptions that the soul of man can comprehend. The hundred and fourth Psalm, in particular,

displays the power and goodness of providence, in creating and preserving the world, and the various tribes of animals in it, with such majestic brevity and beauty, as it is vain to look for in any human composition.

Such of the doctrines of the Gospel as are level to human capacity appear to be agreeable to the purest truth and the soundest morality. All the genius and learning of the heathen world; all the penetration of Pythagoras, Socrates, and Aristotle, had never been able to produce such a system of moral duty, and so rational an account of providence and of man, as is to be found in the New Testament, compared indeed, to this, all other moral and theological wisdom

Loses discountenanced, and, like folly shews.

Works. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON.

A statesman and lawyer in the reign of Queen Elizabeth—
died 1591.

It is deservedly accounted a piece of excellent knowledge to understand the laws of the land, and the customs of a man's country; how much more to know the statutes of heaven, and the laws of eternity, those immutable and eternal laws of justice and righteousness! To know the will and pleasure of the Great Monarch, and

Universal King! I have seen an end of all perfection, but the commandments of God are exceeding broad.

Woodward's Fair Warning. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

MR. ABRAHAM COWLEY.

An eminent English poet; was born in London, 1618—died at Chertsey, 1667.

What can we imagine more proper for the ornaments of wit or learning in the story of Ducalion, than in that of Noah? Why will not the actions of Sampson afford as plentiful matter as the labours of Hercules? Why is not Jephtha's daughter as good a woman as Iphigenia? And the friendship of David and Jonathan more worthy celebration, than that of Theseus and Perithous? Does not the passage of Moses and the Israelites into the holy land yield incomparably more poetical variety, than the voyages of Ulysses or Æneas? Are the obsolete threadbare tales of Thebes and Troy, half so stored with great, heroical, and supernatural actions, as the wars of Joshua, of the Judges, of David, and divers others? Can all the transformations of the gods give such copious hints to flourish and expatiate on, as the true miracles of Christ, or of the prophets, and apostles? What do I instance in these few particulars? All the books of the Bible are either already most ad-

mirable, and exalted pieces of poesy, or are the best materials in the world for it.

Works. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

REV. MATTHEW HENRY.

A learned dissenting teacher and celebrated scripture expositor ; was born in Flintshire, 1662—died 1714.

We call the Divine writings, the Bible, by way of eminency, because it is incomparably the best book that ever was written ; the book of books, shining like the sun in the firmament of learning ; other valuable and useful books, like the moon and stars, borrowing their light from it.

Preface to his Exposition of the Bible.

FRANCIS JUNIUS.

Professor of divinity at Leyden, and joint translator of the Old Testament with Tremellius ; was born at Bourges, 1545 —died at Leyden of the plague, 1602.

When I opened the New Testament I first fixed my eyes on that most august chapter with which St. John begins his Gospel : “ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” I read part of the chapter, says he, and was soon convinced that the divinity of the argument, and the majesty and authority of the style, did far excel all the eloquence and art of human writings : my whole body trembled, my mind was

astonished, and I was so affected all that day, that I knew not where, or what I was. O my God, thou wast mindful of me, according to the multitude of thy mercies; and in pity broughtest home thy lost sheep into thy fold.

Woodward's Fair Warnings. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

The most distinguished Philosopher and Mathematician that has hitherto adorned human nature; was born 1642—died 1727.

We account the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy.

Simpson's Plea.

I find more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible, than in any profane history whatever.

Anecdote related by Dr. Smith to Bishop Watson (Watson's Apology for the Bible). Lond. 8vo. 1806, p. 57.

MARTIN LUTHER.

The illustrious reformer of the church; was born at Islaben, a town in Saxony, Nov. 10, 1483—died Feb. 1546.

It is well known with how great severity God hath commanded his word to be heard and learned; for he most highly esteemeth it, and hath bestowed much labour in defending and

publishing it to the world : he hath suffered all the prophets to come into perils and dangers ; at the last also he sent his own Son, because of his word, whom he suffered to die even the death of the cross ; and what persecutions have not the apostles themselves bore for the word's sake ? What afflictions have not all the Christians suffered ? unto some of whom he hath committed the ministry of his word faithfully to be executed, and to others, he hath enjoined the charge of hearing the same. If there were no other cause besides this, whereby we might be moved to hear and learn God's word, but for that it is the good pleasure, will, and commandment of God, yet this one ought to be sufficiently great and weighty ; for it is our duty as creatures to obey our Lord and Creator with all readiness of mind.

One of St. Paul's words containeth well three of Tully's orations.

Sermons and Table Talk. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.)

As learned men call Homer the father of poets, and the fountain of eloquence and erudition, so Moses is the father of all the prophets, and the true source of heavenly wisdom and heavenly language. It is a very pleasant employment and it is moreover very improving both to the understanding and the memory, to trace in Moses the vestiges of the later prophets, and

to observe how they read his writings, how they learnt them, how they taught them, how they studied them day and night ; in a word, how from his fulness they all collected their riches ! he himself seems to have foreseen and predicted this when he says “ My doctrine shall drop as the rain ; my speech shall distil as the dew.”

MS. Vol. of Criticisms. (Communicated by the Rev. J. Leifchild.)

REV. THOMAS SCOTT,

CHAPLAIN TO THE LOCK HOSPITAL.

I feel myself impelled to declare that I once was not much more disposed to credit the Scriptures than Mr. Payne : and having got rid of the shackles of education was much flattered by my emancipation and superior discernment. But twenty years, employed in diligently investigating the evidences and contents of the Bible, have produced in me an unshaken assurance that it is the Word of God.

Answer to Paine's Age of Reason, p. 23. (Simpson's Plea.)

EDWARD YOUNG, LL.D.

A very distinguished poet, rector of Welwyn, Herts ; was born at Upham, near Winchester, 1681—died 1765.

“ Retire, and read thy bible to be gay,”
There truths abound of sov'reign aid to peace ;
Ah ! do not prize them less, because inspir'd,
As thou, and thine, are apt and proud to do.

If not inspir'd, that pregnant page had stood,
Time's treasure ! and the wonder of the wise !
Thou think'st, perhaps, thy soul alone at stake ;
Alas ! should men mistake thee for a fool ;
What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,
Tho' tender of thy fame, could interpose ?
Believe me, sense, here, acts a double part,
And the true critic is a Christian too.

Night Thoughts. Night 8.

JOHN JAMES ROUSSEAU.

A very distinguished writer and character of the last century ;
was born at Geneva, 1711—died 1778.

I will confess that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel hath its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers with all their pomp of diction ; how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scriptures ! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man ? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains should be himself a mere man ? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary ? What sweetness, what purity in his manner ! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery ! What sublimity in his maxims ! What profound wisdom in his discourses ! what presence of mind ! what subtilty, what truth in his replies ! How great the command over his passions ! Where

is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and so die, without weakness, without ostentation? When Plato describes his imaginary good man, loaded with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ: the resemblance was so striking that all the Fathers perceived it.

Emilius. (Simpson's Plea for Religion.)

JOHN LOCKE.

One of the greatest and most distinguished philosophers this country has produced; was born in Somersetshire, 1632—died 1704.

That the Holy Scriptures are one of the greatest Blessings which God bestows upon the Sons of Men, is generally acknowledged by all who know anything of the value and worth of them. In them the Lord hath dilucidly displayed that Counsel of his Will, that is of infinite concernment to us to understand, in order to our present being accepted of him here, and at last brought to the fullest enjoyment of himself in Glory. 'Tis wonderful to behold, how full and perfect this world is, with respect to this end; what can man desire to know, which is necessary hereunto, that the light thereof discovers not? What direction can he expect, by which he may be fortified against all enemies of his good, either within or without him, that

is not there given? What encouragements would he have which are not therein displayed before him? And what Cavils can be brought against any part of Truth contained therein, to which they themselves yeild not a full resolve? (one place of Scripture so exactly clearing, expounding, and illustrating another) Yet (to amazement) it's observed, that man (who is so highly and principally concerned in it) doth too little value it; he can weary himself in any secular Affair, but diligently to search the Scriptures (according to our Lord's advice) is to him tedious and burthensome. Few covet to be mighty in the Scriptures; though convinced, their great concern is enveloped in them: A Spirit of Self-fulness, Pride, spiritual Sloth, Drowsiness, and Deadness, lies at the bottom of this sinful Neglect. To encourage, awaken Persons to a more diligent thorow search of the mind of God herein, is a service no less profitable than seasonable at this day. And what greater external Encouragement, than to make that facile and easie, which seemed unconquerably arduous and difficult?

A Common-place Book to the Holy Bible. 4to. Lond. 1697, preface.

JOHN SELDEN.

One of the most learned men of the XVII century; was born near Terray in Sussex, 1584—died 1654.

Mr. Selden, the famous lawyer, whom Gro-

tius calls, "the glory of the English nation," was as Sir Matthew Hale declared, "a resolved serious Christian, and a great adversary to Hobbes's errors." He was generally considered as one of the most eminent philosophers, and most learned men of the time. He had taken a diligent survey of all kinds of learning, and had read as much perhaps as any man did; and yet, towards the latter end of his days, he declared to Archbishop Usher, that notwithstanding he had been so laborious in his enquiries, and curious in his collections, and had possessed himself of a treasure of books and manuscripts upon all ancient subjects; yet "he could rest his soul on none save the Scriptures."

This is a perfect eulogium on the Sacred Volume.

(Simpson's Plea.)

LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Henry St. John Viscount Bolingbroke, an eminent statesman and writer; was born 1672—died 1751.

No religion ever appeared in the world, whose natural tendency was so much directed to promote the peace and happiness of mankind as Christianity.

Works.

No system can be more simple and plain than that of natural religion as it stands in the Gospel.

Idem.

The system of religion which Christ published and his evangelists recorded is a complete system to all the purposes of religion, natural and revealed. It contains all the duties of the former, it enforces them by asserting the divine mission of the publisher, who proved his assertion at the same time as his miracles.

Idem, Vol. 4. p. 316.

Christianity as it stands in the Gospel, contains not only a complete, but a very plain system of religion.

Idem.

The Gospel is in all cases one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice and benevolence, and of universal charity.

Idem, Vol. 4. p. 316.

Had Christ's Gospel been propagated with the same simplicity with which it was originally taught by Christ, it would have been to the unspeakable benefit of mankind.

Idem, Vol. 4. p. 316.

The vulgar easily embrace polytheism and idolatry, even after the true doctrine of divine unity has been taught and received; as we may learn from the example of the Israelites; and superstitions grow apace and spread wide where Christianity has been established and daily

taught, as we may learn from the example of the Roman churches.

Idem, Vol. 4. p. 22.

JOSEPH HALL, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

A very eminent and pious prelate, likewise a poet ; was born 1574—died 1656.

I durst appeal to the judgement of any carnal reader, (let him not be prejudiced) that there is no history so pleasant as the sacred ; for should we even set aside the majesty of the inditer, none can compare with it for magnificence, and the antiquity of the matter ; the sweetness of compiling ; and the strange variety of memorable occurrences.

(Simpson's Plea.)

COUNT STRUENSEE.

Prime Minister to Christian VII., king of Denmark—executed for high treason, April 28th, 1772.

The more I learn Christianity from Scripture, the more I grow convinced, how unjust those objections are which it is charged with. I find for instance, that all which Voltaire says of the intolerance of the Christians, and of blood-shedding caused by Christianity, is a very unjust charge laid upon religion. It is easily to be seen, that those cruelties, said to be caused by religion, if properly considered, were the production of human passions, selfishness, and am-

bition, and that religion served in such cases only for a cloak.

I am fully convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, and I feel its power in quieting my conscience, and reforming my sentiments. I have examined it during a good state of health, and with all the reason I am master of. I tried every argument, I felt no fear, I have taken my own time, and I have not been in haste. I own with joy, I find Christianity more amiable the more I get acquainted with it. I never knew it before. I believed it contradicted reason and the nature of man whose religion it was designed to be. I thought it an artfully contrived and ambiguous doctrine, full of incomprehensibilities. Whenever I formerly thought on religion in some serious moments, I had always an idea in my mind how it ought to be, which was, it should be simple and accommodated to the abilities of men in every condition. I now find Christianity to be exactly so; it answers entirely that idea which I had formed of true religion. Had I but formerly known it was such, I should not have delayed turning Christian till this time of my imprisonment. But I had the misfortune to be prejudiced against religion, first through my own passions, but afterwards likewise through so many human inventions, foisted into it, of which I could see plainly that they had no foundation, though they were styled essential parts of Chris-

tianity; I was offended when God was always represented to me as an angry, jealous judge, who is much pleased when he has an opportunity of shewing his revenge, though I knew he was love itself; and am now convinced, that though he must punish, yet he takes no kind of delight in it, and is rather for pardoning. From my infancy, I have known but few Christians that had not scandalized me by their enthusiasm, and wickedness, which they wanted to hide under the cloak of piety. I knew indeed that not all Christians were such or talked such an affected language; but I was too volatile to enquire of better Christians after the true spirit of religion. Frequently I heard sermons in my youth, but they made no impression upon me. That without Christ there was no salvation, was the only truth which served for a subject in all sermons, and this was repeated over and over again in synonymous expressions. But it was never set in its true light, and never properly proved. I saw people cry at church, but after their tears were dried up, I found them in their actions not in the least better, but rather allowing themselves in every transgression, upon the privilege of being faithful believers.

Narrative of his Conversion and Death. (Simpson's Sac. Lit.

The Free-thinkers extol the fables of Æsop, but the parables and narrations of Christ will not please them; notwithstanding they are de-

rived from a knowledge of nature, and contain more excellent morality. Besides, they are proposed with a more noble and artless simplicity, than any writings of this kind, among ancient or modern authors.

Idem.

WILLIAM COWPER.

A very distinguished modern English poet ; was born at Berkhamstead, 1731,—died 1800.

The Spirit breathes upon the word,
And brings the truth to sight :
Precepts and promises afford
A sanctifying light.

A glory gilds the sacred page
Majestic, like the sun ;
It gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none.

The hand that gave it still supplies
The gracious light and heat,
His truths upon the nations rise ;
They rise, but never set.

Let everlasting thanks be thine
For such a bright display,
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

(Inserted in the Congregational Hymns.)

They know not—

That Scripture is the only cure of woe :

That field of promise, how it flings abroad

Its odours o'er the Christian's thorny road ;

The soul, reposing on assur'd relief,

Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,

Forgets her labour as she toils along,

Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.

Poem on Truth.

SAMUEL TORSHELL,

A theological writer in the reign of Charles the First.

Holy Scripture is the greatest treasury of heavenly wisdom and science that the whole earth hath in keeping ; and on which we cannot put too high a value. Let me add some just characters of the whole Bible, and the particular books ; some of which I have gathered from the ancients and others, but many of them holding out their own evidence.

THE WHOLE BIBLE.

The soul's food ; so Athanasius.

The common shop of soul-physis ; so Basil.

The invariable rule of truth ; so Iræneus.

The divine balance ; so Augustin.

1. *In respect of the dictating of it ; it is,*
The library of the Holy Ghost.

Christ's aphorisms.

The acts and statutes of the highest parliament.

God's mint-house.

The signet of God's right hand.

The epistle of God to the world.

The court-roll of God's fines and amercements.

2. *In respect of its worth ; it is,*

A stately palace.

A fruitful field.

The true Hesperides.

The inestimable pearl.

3. *In respect of its use ; it is,*

The touch-stone of error.

The key of the sheep-fold.

The glass of life.

The weather-glass.

The Christian's magazine.

The armoury.

PARTICULAR BOOKS.

GENESIS.	The cabinet of greatest antiquities.
EXODUS.	The sacred rule of law and justice.
LEVITICUS.	The holy ephemerides.
NUMBERS.	God's arithmetic.

DEUTERONOMY.	The faithful monitor.
JOSHUA.	The holy war.
JUDGES.	The mirror of magistrates and tyrants.
RUTH.	The picture of a pious widow.
SAMUEL. }	Sacred Politics.
KINGS. }	
CHRONICLES.	The holy annals.
EZRA. }	An idea of church and state reformation.
NEHEMIAH. }	
ESTHER.	The great example of God's providence.
JOB.	The school of patience.
PSALMS.	The soul's soliloquies.
	The little bible.
	The anatomy of conscience.
	The rose garden.
	The pearl island.
PROVERBS.	Divine ethics, politics, œco- nomics.
ECCLESIASTES.	Experience of the creature's vanity.
CANTICLES.	The mystical bride song.
ISAIAH.	The evangelical prophet.
JEREMIAH.	The pathological mourner.
LAMENTATIONS.	The voice of the turtle.
EZEKIEL.	Urim and Thummim in Ba- bylon.
DANIEL.	The apocalypse of the Old Testament.

HOSEA.	Sermons of faith and repentance.
JOEL.	The thunderer.
AMOS.	The plain-dealing reprover.
OBADIAH.	Edom's whip.
JONAH.	The prophetical Apostle of the Gentiles.
MICAH.	The wise men's star.
NAHUM.	The scourge of Assur.
HABAKKUK.	The comforter of Captives.
ZEPHANIAH.	Preparation for sad times.
HAGGAI.	Zeal for God's house.
ZACHARIAH.	Prophetic hieroglyphics.
MALACHI.	The bound-stone of the two Testaments.
MATTHEW.	The four trumpeters proclaiming the title of the Great King.
MARK.	
LUKE.	
JOHN.	
ACTS.	The treasury of ecclesiastical history.
ROMANS.	The principles of Christian faith. The catholic catechism.
1 CORINTHIANS.	Apostolical reformation.
2 CORINTHIANS.	A pattern of just apologies.
GALATIANS.	The epistle to the Romans epitomized.
EPHESIANS.	The opening of the great mystery of salvation.
PHILIPPIANS.	An apostolical parænesis.

COLOSSIANS.	A brief rule of faith and manners.
1 THESSALONIANS.	Practic theology.
2 THESSALONIANS.	Polemic theology.
1 TIMOTHY.	The sacred pastoral.
2 TIMOTHY.	The title of the Scripture pleaded.
TITUS.	Agenda, or church orders.
PHILEMON.	The rule of relations.
HEBREWS.	A commentary upon Leviticus.
JAMES.	The golden alphabet of a Christian.
1 PETER.	A theological summary.
2 PETER.	The encouragement of a spiritual warrior.
1 JOHN.	The glass of love, or charity.
2 JOHN.	The pattern of a pious matron.
3 JOHN.	The mirror of hospitality.
JUDE.	A picture of false prophets.
REVELATIONS.	Daniel redivivus. The opening of the treasury of future events.

A Design about disposing the Bible into an Harmony;
1647. (From the Phenix, 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1707.)

CONCLUSION.



IN tracing onwards from remote ages up to our own times the evidence of the inestimable value and beauty of the Holy Scriptures, the reader may be well tempted to exclaim, with one who inherited a far less portion of them than that which *he* can now call his own, “The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea I have a goodly heritage.” The security of this inheritance is the type and earnest of its heavenly Original. In health and in sickness, in prosperity and in adversity, in wealth and in poverty, in life and in death, it is still inalienable ; for it is the gift of One from whose fatherly love no earthly casualty can separate us. Some among those whose sentiments are here given, even from their youth upwards, have claimed the Scriptures as their guide ; a larger class has in later life submitted to their direction ; but all without exception have, as their earthly sojourn drew to its close, praised God for having in the

gift of the Scriptures fulfilled his promise of "guiding them by his counsel," beseeching Him through that Saviour whom they reveal, to "receive" them "into His glory." At a moment such as this, what would seem all the doubts and the cavillings of those whom the pride of imperfect knowledge, or the disobedience of an uncontrolled will, have led in opposition to the word of truth? While they have lingered on the threshold of the sacred fabric, scanning with impiety and ridicule its form and proportions, the believer, guided by that Spirit, without which none can enter its courts, has found it to be, indeed, a temple not made with hands, and has acknowledged with holy admiration that its "builder and founder" is God. In this temple have a Newton, a Bacon, and a Locke, amid a host of great and virtuous men, bowed the knee in humble adoration of infinite wisdom and love. There have they confessed that, as yet, they but "knew in part;" and thence looked forward to that hour when faith shall spring up into knowledge, and hope cease in fruition. Neither the diversity of languages, the natural barrier of nations, nor the differences of the sects which unhappily rend Christianity, have been permitted to oppose the progress of the Scriptures. Many are the nations of which it might be said, in the words of that prophecy which depicted the dawn of Christ's religion, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light ;

and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up."

In bringing this little work to a close, the Editor cannot but express the parting wish that his readers may be enabled, to the testimonies of past ages, to add that of their own experience of the inestimable value of the Sacred Volume. Thus will they hand down to the generations to come, augmented evidence of the truth of the Scriptures; since the record of their practical effect and of the heavenly blessings they confer, must be confessed to be amongst the most obvious proofs of their divine original.

August 25, 1838.

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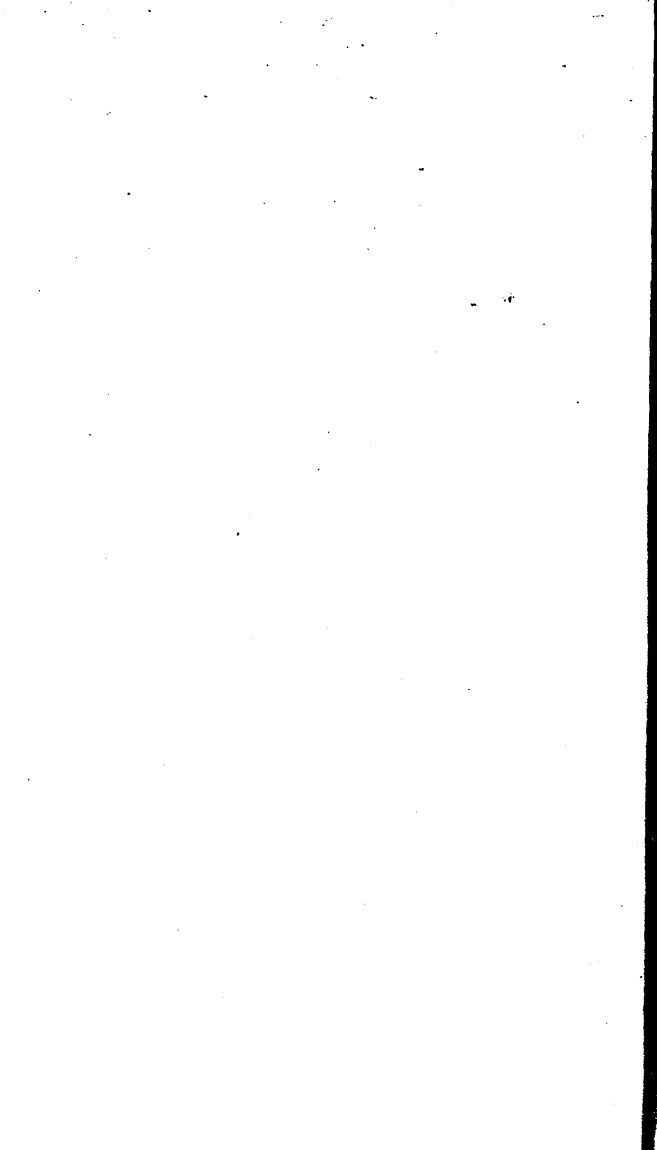
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